

THE AUTHOR

"If you pick up a starving dog and feed him with bones I will not
you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man."

MARK TWAIN

MUTHANNA SPEAKS OUT



THE COORG MEMOIRS

(The Story of the Kodavas)

By

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Mrs (Dr) ANNIE BESANT (1920)

"As long as India lives, the memory of the magnificent services rendered by her will also live."

GANDHI'

"In token of love and homage to her whose radiant spirit rekindled India's faith ... and awakened Indians to a sense of their dignity, their heritage and their destiny ..."

SAROJINI

"To the younger generation of today she might be just a name, but to us and to our elders, she was a tremendous figure and a magnificent personality."

NEHRU



This work is Dedicated

to

Dr. (Mrs.) ANNIE BESANT
(1847-1933)

My spiritual mother

&

*who was once called 'mother' by the
millions of India, including Gandhiji.*



27 JUL 1972

PREFACE

MACAS

It is not an ordinary joke to get a book printed with myself somewhere far away and my printer here in India. This is like moving both the heaven and hell together. Only we—the printer and myself—know the difficulties that we encounter in carrying out a job like this and yet we carry on that way. In spite of our best efforts, I am sorry to say that there are some printing mistakes in the book. I request the readers to first refer to the Chapter 79, Page 563, and correct all those typographical errors and then begin to read the book. But don't start reading, I repeat, without correcting those errors. At the same Chapter 79, I have made some factual corrections also which, please note! As to the contents of the book, one could see that there is very little plan or order from chapter to chapter, but those 80 chapters are just the pieces of haphazard writings now grouped together under seven or eight parts as given in the book.

My object here—as the readers would find out as they go through the pages, is to expose some fraud. For doing this, I am not the least responsible. The people concerned alone invited me to do that. Moreover, after seeing all that what had been seen, I would say that even a worm would not keep quiet all that long without expressing itself, and no smart crook anywhere should think that one could get away without being noticed, and that if one keeps quiet it is a mark of one's weakness. After all one can fool some people for some time but not all people for all time.

In this narrative if one finds at some places some bitter comments in respect of some persons that did not mean I am personally hostile to them. Indeed, I am not ! In fact, I had nothing to do with them. Please don't read my mind through your own mind. That kind of thing is very dangerous. I have seen enough of it with all sorts of street pedestrians. After all my mind is just mine, and not like that of yours nor have I in my mind such depth and design that I have been able to find in others. But, Let me state that in the back of my mind I strongly felt that the ways and views of some people were very derogatory and detrimental for a developing society. Secondly, when they continuously showed as such, I, of course, took the opportunity to speak out, and that I did in the interest of the community. I don't get anything out of it but others could gain something from it. There is nothing personal involved in this narrative though personal experiences had a lot to do to influence this writing.

This work is significant for one more thing. It makes a wide survey of the Kodava race but I have been careful not to repeat all that I said in my earlier work, " A Tiny Model State of South India ". I took care to add every bit of fresh information to make this narrative on Kodavas complete, and the names of about 200 persons are listed under the chapters : " Who is Who Among the Kodavas ", and elsewhere.

I am happy to write good things about so many people even though I am well aware of the fact that a few of them were just funks and phonies. There are also some ' empty drums ' who unnecessarily make noise even though many know them as hypocrites. There is no need to hesitate to

expose such fake characters. Indeed, I have no tears to shed for them. It is for the public good that such men are brought to the open and shown to the people as a novelist would usually depict the rôle of a B (means, a bastard) who would be professional, not in 3 R's, but in 3 B-s, (means-bragging, bluffing and bribing).

I spoke at some length on cultural aspects of the Kodava life, and I have also been critical of those opportunists who mislead and misdirect the people. I have tried to give specific instances for what I said in this book. The observance of some essential rites, after all, are the marks of social discipline and those should be meaningfully adhered to in order to make the traditional values remain intact.

I have said enough that those Samaja buildings in Coorg towns are there only to wipe out even those few remaining traces of customs and rituals and supplement them with 'artificial lungs' to breathe, which should ultimately die. So it is from such debris one has to salvage those age old values and I don't know how those of today would consider things that I am trying to say. What is missing today is a good leadership, not only in political sense, but even in social and cultural fields. One drop of poison could pollute the entire bucket of water and so also a few worms could spoil the entire breed. I saw all that happening that way and I saw the Kodavas proving themselves unworthy of their separate identity.

Who and what of the Kodavas? Like all those millions of our country, Kodavas too emerged from the jungles, and like all those ethnic groups, including brahmins, Kodavas too nurtured a remarkable social values in the

past. As to the origin of the Kodavas, I may direct those who are interested in the subject, to the chapter 33 of my earlier book—the contents of which have not been so far duplicated anywhere and by anyone. Some great sociologists have testified that particular chapter on Kodavas as a remarkable piece of writing, and I too think that it must be so !

As I see more of Coorg and of India, my scale of admiration to the British rises high, and I have given ample evidence to the fact. The freedom to a mutilated country won without even a fighter or martyr, was after all no freedom. Some men had midnight meetings and purchased political power for themselves after slicing an ancient country. But traitors die before they could tell their own story. That C.R. of Madras, still living, said in his 93rd year of senility, the whole truth just two months back. He said, "Md. Ali Jinnah was not really keen on partition of Indiahe calculated—the Congress would not yield to partition."

Ah ! Say some more such things, old man ! That was the truth which he was hiding for 24 long years. Those Muslim fanatics are anyway better as patriots than the Hindu vagrants of no character or nationalism. The Hindus knew only to lose and not to win. The whole country including Jinnah, had expected that the Hindu Congressmen would not accept partition, but see—what the hybrids did ! Thus the country failed and those men at the top were anxious only to share the spoils of power and then said they secured freedom and asked the monkeys to dance in the streets. Those older men should have lived longer to tell the whole truth of their sins they committed

in the name of the country and also see for themselves the legacy they left behind for the succeeding generations with hundreds of sickly problems.

Anyway past is past. Another point I stressed in this book was about the mock democracy that was enacted in Coorg in 1952-56. That was certainly a *Tamaasha* that afforded some comic scenes to the stalemate of the day. There was no need for such a show but thanks to the States Re-organization Commission that within two years they found that such Governments conducted by men who suddenly emerged from all available street corners was just a fraud on the people who realised too soon the truth of the saying that 'democracy rarely permits a country to be governed by its ablest men'. But where are men in the country—let alone the ablest—because the country had to elect a woman to do the job!

Indian history had always been that. When men fight like dogs the country was ruled by foreigners, and now in these days of freedom the alternative is—women! That is wonderful! If a vast and ancient country is like that what to say of small district like Coorg which too was given a Government. There was no rule of law, no rule of ethics, nothing—in those days. The so-called human rights, fundamental rights etc, were a sham in the hands of scoundrels of the time. Those mighty judges of the petty courts of Coorg too ran helter-skelter for safety of their heads, let alone the others. Once in 1955-56, the High Court had to caution them saying, "The local magistrates issued search warrants and acted like more machines as per the orders of the Government. They seem to have not taken into account anything of constitutional

propriety”.

But where was the constitution and where does the question of its ‘propriety’ arise? Well, the S.R.C. said about all that hoax of a system of the Government which men carved for themselves with dubious and deceptive designs. The S.R.C. said about ‘the interplay for personal ambitions and jealousies’. I have substantiated here what they had meant by that. The S.R.C. said that those men ‘fared rather poorly’. I would say that was put rather mildly; indeed, they fared miserably, and I have explained that too! The S.R.C. said, ‘the existing position is all the more unsatisfactory’. Yes, the position was like that of those suffering from cancer for those four long years in 1952-56. The S.R.C. said of ‘personal touch..... personal rule’. Yes, I have spoken about their notorious game of witch-hunting and shadowing people. They didn’t do anything else. They showed for instance, Rs. 5/-worth of fake deed for every Rs. 1,000 they gathered, squandered or misappropriated—all jointly and firmly. I have said all about that in pages ahead. The S.R.C. said, ‘services lost initiative’. That I think they told it to me because out of those thousands who had lost initiative it was I who demonstrated that loss of a little initiative that I had and ran away. The S.R.C. said that the claim put to them by those small states ‘cannot be accepted’.

Yes, no one did accept any of their bogus claims. Their performance in 1952-56, even from the standard of the medieval barbarians, was a thorough failure. I have profusely quoted and minutely illustrated all those facts concerning the fraudulent claims of a few who were out on

deceiving a generation of men and women. I know that some bluffers have written books, perhaps, after having been heavily bribed for doing so by those who gave them money 'anonymously' as a writer had made us known. I have tried to explain what it was at the chapters 5, 8, 18 to 23, 31, 33, 75, 76 etc. Anyway how long such impudent howlers and deliberate distortions by those known blackmailers would feed those poor people of Coorg though they are rich in money?

Now coming to the point of small states, not that there are no such small states in the world. In fact there are many all over. In India we have Delhi, Goa, Pondichery, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya and so on apart from those Himalayan abodes of Sikkim and Bhutan, and there are many more tiny tots of states sprinkled all over the map of the world—all functioning very efficiently. In all those places there are people and politics but it was astounding that the jungle tribe of Coorg of the 18th century could not rise up to the occasion of the 20th century and retain their entity and identity which the British had given to them. The tribal greed that was itching and the local prejudices and jealousies that were scratching from within along with the brutal desire for making money and a passionate craze for grabbing power showed itself and that showed itself in all its naked knavery.

This is not a fiction; this is a fact! All this I saw in Coorg. There is nothing more for me to see. When the British started to educate our jungle forefathers who were just the tribals in 'An Area of Darkness', their ideal was to create a society of civilized people imbued with knowledge and wisdom. But such ideals soon became meaning-

less. Now education is not to acquire 3 R-s but only to train 3 C-s, and those are crooks, creeps and clowns. With this sort of thing I see people as they grow old becoming crude and not wise. Some of those about whom I wrote in this book would 'set out for my blood' (Vide-Hilton Brown, Page 255), for stating some matter of fact things, but what else could I say?

All are aware of the fact that some people thrive or get kicked up to the air like balloons from out of the mistakes made by others, and that from out of such mistakes the wildcats reap benefits. It was not for nothing that some impudent characters like Gupta, Guggu, Boggu, Baloo, Chandú and others are being created here in these pages in order to spice the story of the Kodavas. Anyway, like a novelist, I did not get into the job of depicting the cunning, callous, calculating and criminal side of their depths and designs. All the same, ignoring such men would be dangerous, and that was what I found by experience. It's always the worms that poison the living stuff and those could even cause cancer to the society. Too much of those would obviously cause 'tumour' that corrodes the social, communal, religious and ritualistic complex of any well-established ethnic groups, and which, of course, is a deplorable fact.

The trouble with us is that we are losing ground morally and ethically even though some rich self-righteous 'bluff and bluster' elements try to make a show of themselves in the way they are doing; but our people are all philosophers, and the most crooked of the lot philosophize their designs more to dupe the world around them. That atrocious game also is a significant part of our culture.

The pleasure and privilege that democracy afforded to us is that one could see that only money that is ruling the roost today but not brain, talents and moral scruples, and the pleasure that I might derive out of seeing such things is equal to the one I get when I look at some fantastically barren, dry and dreary desert covered with wild thorny bush.

I have to say something about writing concerning myself. It is somewhat refreshing to write on oneself if the one who writes such a thing is not a rascal. An objective assessment of one's life is a relishing thing if one who does it is honest. Whether I am one like that or not is not my business to say. I wrote about myself in response to the wishes of some friends—both inside and outside Coorg. All that, of course, an old story but only said and let out now.

I felt that I speak out, but I confined this narrative only to Coorg and the Kodavas alone. When I spoke about some people here one should not think that as an effort to play them down. I know that no one is perfect but when one takes to a trade of deliberately cheating the entire mass of people—rather selfishly and maliciously—someone should somehow point out the hoax. In fact one could see that I have not spoken about any of my intimate associates of Coorg because that was not my aim in writing this. I considered the society and community more important than a few odd individuals, and, therefore, in the interest of the public I discussed things in this work.

I should also strike a note of warning that one need not be carried away by the impression that all that I wrote about me applied to me alone and to none else. That

should not be the way to look at others after hiding their own skeletons in the cupboard. As one goes on reading one could look at oneself and then think how far the story would apply to him. In fact, the experiences of mine may also have been the reflection of everyone's life in varying degrees. There are multiple ways to lead men to struggles and sorrows as there are the same multiple ways to lead them into joys and happiness. If an artist or a writer is true to himself his depiction of life or of anything that he creates would also be true and beautiful. If he is treacherous to himself than his works will also be just be fraud and he would deceive not only his own conscience but everyone around him.

The rest of the things I wanted to say could be found in the pages of this book. Some of those lines of the Kavi's songs are added here only to see that my efforts at translating those should not be a waste. They are just the specimens of those beautiful poetry that could be found only in the original.

However, now, before closing this note, I request once again to correct all those printing mistakes listed in the errata at Page 563, Chapter 79, and than start glancing through the pages. For a ready reference to names of people discussed here, a well-compiled index is given at the end of the book.

Thank you !

the 1st December 1971,
Vancouver B.C., Canada.

I. M. Muthanna

27 JUL 1972

27 JUL 1972

CONTENTS

	Page
i. Preface	... iii
ii. Contents	... xiii
iii. Thus Sang Appacha Kavi	... xvii

Part I—A REVIEW

1. A Review of my Own Views	... 1
2. Never Wrote Anything Like This	... 4
3. Topics of General Interest Only	... 7
4. An Illuminating Foreword	... 10
5. Literary Career and Generous Souls	... 13
6. This is Not a Pleasant Duty	... 17
7. Atrocious Bungling of Words	... 23
8. This Looks like Just Hypocrisy	... 27
9. A Peep into the Origin—Who Peeped ?	... 30
10. What's the Religious Significance ?	... 35
11. This Is Absolutely Nonsense	... 38
12. On Jewellery and Martial Traditions	... 43

Part II—HISTORY

13. Some Outrageous Distortions	... 48
14. Some More Wrong Impressions	... 53
15. 'Welfare'—When and Where ?	... 57
16. Some More Interesting Howlers	... 60
17. The End of the British Rule	... 63
18. 'On the Road to Phenomenal Progress'	... 69
19. The Illusion of 'Economic Stability'	... 74
20. Some More Absurd Statements	... 79
21. Fantastic Nonsense in Almost Every Line	... 88

	Page
22. Yes, ' Vicious...Black Shadow '	... 96
23. But...the Kodavas Failed	... 102
24. Coorg — As a State Wiped Out	... 107
25. A Shrewd and Ambitious Politician	... 112

Part III—' GUPTA '

26. This Looks Like Talking Shop	... 125
27. Self-Publicity Has No Limits	... 129
28. Reviews in Papers Outside Coorg	... 135
29. ' An Act—Highly Mischievous '	... 138
30. ' Literary Career and Journalistic Mischief '	... 143
31. The Kodagu—A Vicious Journal	... 153
32. The Politicians and Book Reviewers	... 160
33. A Family Album—Printed	... 169

Part IV—NAMES

34. I Explain Names Again	... 177
35. One More Word About ' Names '	... 185
36. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(i)	... 190
37. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(ii)	... 199
38. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(iii)	... 207
39. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(iv)	... 214
40. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(v)	... 223
41. Who is Who Among the Kodavas—(vi)	... 233
42. The Kodavas—Some Historical Landmarks	... 244
43. They Certainly Stand Unrivalled	... 250

Part V—MYSELF

44. I Saw the Five Decades of Changes	... 261
45. A Snake-bite on my First Article	... 273

	Page
46. 'Kodava Samskriti'—What's This ?	... 279
47. A Mad Fellow Going About Crazy	... 285
48. Too Many Things But too Little	... 289
49. Haradas Appacha Kavi Discovered	... 295
50* Gandhi Jayanti Celebrations	... 303
51* The Legislative Council Proceedings	... 310
52* About Gandhi Jayanti in the Council	... 316
53* A Literary Society Without Literature	... 325
54* Surveyed the Indian Landscape	... 331
55* People-Fever & Fever-People	... 335

Part VI-Book

56. Many Things At a Time	... 344
57. Going & Coming and Coming & Going 350
58. Coorg History & Trip to Jaipur 359
59. 'A Tiny Model State'—Came Out !	... 367
60. Book, Book, Book and Book	... 373
61. The Other Three Categories of People	... 380
62. What's This— Book or Hook ? 388
63. Permission to Write—To Write What ?	... 393
64* Look, They Said, 'I Was Trading'	... 401
65* A Reward for an Insignificant Work	... 407
66* I Saw That and Here I Record That	... 413
67* A Mock Democracy— Enacted	... 426
68. And, At Last I 'Ran Away' 439

* These Chapter numbers have gone wrong. Please correct them in the text as shown above at the pages 303, 310, 316, 325, 331 and 335, and, again at pages 401, 407, 413 and 426.

	Page
Part VII—Samaja	
69. 'Much Ado About Nothing'	... 451
70. 'Rather Battle Upwards and Onwards'	... 462
71. That Guggu—The Incurrigible	... 473
72. Jaguar—Spotted Jaggu and Boggu	... 483
73. My Letters to the Kodava Samaja	... 494
74. The So-Called Kodagu Company	... 506
75. They Had no True Story to Say	... 515
76. There are Some Writers on Coorg	... 523
77. Some last-Minute Reminiscences	... 534
78. Chengappa and Ganapathy in Schools	... 555
79. Some Corrections and Additions	... 563
Part VIII—Epilogue	
80. The Dream That Took me to Shores	... 574
Index	... 605



27 JUN 1972
THUS SANG APPACHA KAVI

1

Oh Mother Ambikaa, protect the world
Mighty Chandikaa, the destroyer of the wicked,
Remove all the evils that prevail and persist,
Chamundi, the slayer of the demons, protect
Oh, Meenakshi, Kaamakshi, guard the devotees,
Ye, Bhagavati, Durgi, save us from the sins,
Oh, Bhuvaneshwari, the spouse of Shiva, raise,
Up your hands on to Haradasa, and bless.

2

Ye my sky-blue sweet-heart,
Where you hide from me at last?
There you shone at the balcony
Only to put me now in agony;
What lively moments we then had
With frequent love-tales not so sad.
Now tell me where else you could be
Playing and singing alone like bee?
Flowers, rose, pink blue and green
Tell me where's my beloved gone.
Trees, tall and short, banyan and teak,
Show my lovely bride for me to speak.
Oh singing cuckoo and talking parrot,
Did my lass speak, and if so what?
Show me, birds, my darling bride
Deers and rabbits - did she hide?

Ye come, come all, oh maidens,
Look, what a lovely garden and flowers,
Pluck the red, white and bluish buds,
Jasmines, roses, lilies and lotus,
Petals of myriad colours along the fence,
There around, here surround, oh friends.
Gather all that in garlands long
In lovely bouquets and bunches bring,
To decorate the hair of our fair queen,
And to Shambhu's spouse that fragrant jasmine.

More the desire—more the misery,
Achuta, pray, guide thou the greedy.
What a foolish idea of the man
Who thinks he has a century to run ?
Half of it is gone in sleep
The other half to learn and leap ;
Years wasted in brooding and breeding,
Where's time for knowing and praying ?
Look, soon one hears Yama's call,
That's the time one's pride should fall ;
And with rope He ties his neck,
Pulls him out of the world to dark ;
The mortal clay of the body remain
To mourn along with shots of gun,
Carried then to bury or burn
And drop the ash in water that run ;
What after all this existence—
The birth and death and worldly mess ?

5

I toil not for your sake, you silly whore,
 Nor do I feed myself under you, oh spinster,
 I struggle to retain my father's prestige
 Beware, curse be on thee, ye royal stooge.

6

I offer you with all my pride
 This lovely lass as your bride.
 Oh my son-in-law and daughter,
 I pray, be blessed with God's favour ;
 Live long true to home and fame
 Like the hanging bronze lamp flame,
 With children and grand-children flourish,
 Like the boiling milk that over-flows,
 Let the glory of our fathers
 Be on you as torch that burns.
 Hear, my daughter, obey the elders,
 Serve the in-laws without remorse,
 Let Parvati who delights seeing
 The Power of Shiva, bless you, darling.

7

Oh Kumaara, the slayer of the wicked,
 I've found for you the Beauty, indeed.
 At Mount Lavalī as Vyadhā's daughter
 Grows up your beloved, looks lovelier
 With dazzling countenance of the sun
 She excels the beauty of the moon.
 Blue-eyed with colour of ripe lemons
 Long black hair flows down the ankles,
 With a glowing face and charming grace
 A star like that is rare in heavens !

8

There, I behold, two lovely maidens,
And here I see from behind the creepers,
Seems like dawn that's born in morns,
In the open park they relax like bees.
Theirs what a stately curve and coy
Like heavenly models slim and shy,
Long flowing hair and shining black,
Snow-white dolls see how they talk !
The pairs of slacks and tightened blouse
Hide pert breasts and charming curves ;
Those are the shapely thighs and knees
That peep beneath the silken skirts.
They talk with eyes and laugh in cheeks,
My lips must press their lips and charms.

9

That handsome lad who peeped in now
Where at last disappeared—how ?
Bathed and dressed, perfumed, I did
The fragrance kept me waiting round.
Dotted silken skirts are fine,
My lover's dream is as of mine ;
My sapphire chain and necklace all
The diamond ring that glitters were ;
Waited with hot cup of milk
Betel leaf to chew with nut,
Waited long in soft spread bed
For the love-play of the wed.

10

Live oh bridegroom, live well and full,
Struggled thou in quest of lovely doll,
Wandering all along the route
You found the royal bride at last.
Struggled thee hard in sun and rain,
Fortune smiled with pride and grin.
Let me bless with rice in hand,
Sip the cup of milk with pride.
I bless thee sure live well and full
With spouse and kids and wealth and mirth,
Pray, be blessed by Three-eyed
Shiva for years, oh son and bride.

11

Look, the maid with a pot full of water
Flashed like a lightning alongside there :
With soft round curves and starry eyes,
And face that radiates calm and poise.

12

The crop raised by the sweat and toil
Of the humble folks of the soil
Should rightly belong to them, my friend,
For you it may be poison to grind.

13

The seasoned and trained alone could work
In the royal courts note this truth ;
The rest will perish amidst that mess
Of deceit and corrupt but polished thieves.

14

The gallant race that of Britain,
Crossed the seas to reach our town,
Suppressed all the evil force,
And ruled the land with justice.

15

Hari, Hara and Brahma together
Watched the devoted couple there,
Treading along the slushy field
Gathering all sown seeds to feed ;
In pitch dark night they pick the rice
To cook and treat the surprised guests.

16

There I see the green-lit shade,
Ornaments no more I need.
What a joyous sight moon-light,
Lovely breeze that cools the night.
It's here and now the lovers should
Play exchanging garlands round.

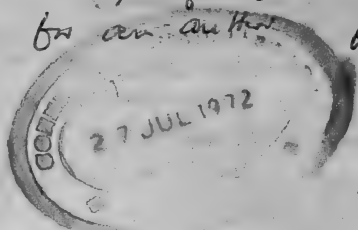
17

Oh Aadi Kaveri, holy Mother, I
 Bow down to your feet !
 Oh Madhava, Parameshwara, and
 Vedamurti, I prostrate !
 Oh Three Lovers of Trimurtis, hail
 Blessed by thy Lords !
 Oh Daughter of the Mountain, pour
 On us the Divine grace !
 Oh Granter of thy spouses' desire,
 Lopamudraa, I salute !
 Oh Washer of sins of the sinners,
 Purify the Universe !
 Oh Mentor of the holy Ganga and
 Jamuna and Tungabhadra !
 Oh Kaveri- the Mother of Ganga, bless,
 the Haradasa prays ! Amen ! !

*(From the Kavi's Centenary Brochure—Published
 by this author in 1968)*

7
+ + /
Muthu is as egoistic as
Coorgis are, besides he is a Boy.
His thought language is Kodava which
~~he should have~~ or he should have
written in Kodava language.

His knowledge of English is
deplorable for an author.





THE COORG MEMOIRS.

(The Story of the Kodavas)

PART I

A REVIEW.

1. A REVIEW OF MY OWN VIEWS.

"What a piece of work is a man ! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculties-in form and moving, how express and admirable.... !"

Now, let me add ; how beautiful are the above words ; how exquisite are the sentiments expressed ; how impressive and touching are those noble thoughts ! Lo, halt ! Those are just the poetic perorations and those would not take us too far because that same artist and poet in man had another one-hundred things to say about man as the most unpredictable beast among the beasts ! Here is the most apt tribute to the perverted faculties of man's mind, and that said :

"Which is the basest creature, man or beast ?
Birds feed on birds, beasts on each others' prey ;
But savage man alone does man betray ,
Man undoes man- to do himself no good."

These are a few lines of " A Satire Against the Mankind ", by another satirist. The literary wealth of the world is enriched to an Oceanic proportions because of what was said as ' man undoes man '. Therefore, one could see that

every work of art and that of scripture depicting the mind of man, which is potentially rich and great, and creative as well as destructive! It is the mind that conquered nature, split the atom and took him over the other planets but the poor man, after all, failed to conquer his own mind!

Well, what exactly I am saying here? This part of the narrative in this book goes under the caption, 'A Review' but let me say that it is not just a review of a pageant, a parade, a portrait or of a fancy dress competition of a bunch of clowns. This is a sort of review of my own views and observations and experiences and this pertains to Coorg and to Kodavas only. The first thirty-five years of one's life and the impressions gained in all its aspects, I believe, is more than sufficient to record things right here. I mix up the stories of the people with that of my own and thus it becomes a 'memoir' of a queer mind. I don't mind if it is like that because the whole thing was somehow written in a hurry whenever and wherever I got some time to do so and then dispatched it to the press in a greater hurry, where, of course, it took considerable time to come out in print. Therefore, some incidents depicted here obviously seem a bit out of date but I couldn't help it, however.

I started to write this in 1960, but I gave it up. Again I thought to take this up in 1965, but then I felt that I need some more time to think and form an opinion of men and matters, because, more the time one could take more definite and honest would be the conclusions. This work, therefore, was not a product of just a day or a month. It had taken considerable time. It is alright to cherish the memories of the past but it is not a joke to record them

honestly even if there are records to support them. I have stated quite a few of my own experiences, but ye, let no one think that all that I said was exclusively my story alone! If anyone thinks that way, he would be wrong. In fact, I represent a good many of those who suffered and toiled. Mrs. Annie Besant had put it that: "Because of suffering, my child, you will be much more capable of understanding others".

It sounds as though she tells it to me right now! Yes, I too did understand others but it was not by easy carefree means of looking at others through jaundiced eyes and by passing malicious comments, but by a regular exercise of knowing oneself. I quietly allowed myself to get tossed about and finally I got the fellows all right and therein the pleasure of knowing the crude mind of man who suffered from a lack of understanding heart. The mediocres and novices are not the one to suffer or to understand. To be one of appreciating and understanding others, one should surrender oneself completely and then and then alone one could be "much more capable of understanding others".

Well, did I succeed even in that? I think the readers themselves would be able to judge as to how far I have gone. I don't claim that I have succeeded in revealing the fraud and deception and exploitation by some people, but I feel that I have done my best taking the risk of my being misunderstood in whatever way one could think of! Still I do feel that in the pages ahead I told things in the best interests of the community and the general public and especially the younger ones who are apt to be misguided by fake and deceitful products sold in the markets!

2. NEVER WROTE ANYTHING LIKE THIS!

A very important thing that should be noted here is that I had never indulged in writing anything of this kind as I am doing now. It was about twenty years back that the book on Coorg, 'the first of its kind' with a wealth of information and entitled—A Tiny Model State of South India, came out. It was a tame, harmless and yet an encyclopaedic volume, and that was enough to give a shock to good many fellows and to excite jealousy in many more, as some people had been repeatedly telling me. Well, may it be so! All that was due to the fact that they had not at all seen such a book till then, at least inside Coorg, and some people who saw the book which contained nothing but a plain matter-of-fact things, seemed to have had a sort of nervous breakdown. What can I, or anyone do? Anyway it was within such a narrow groove and clannish filth the people were then living, and even now, I am aware, it is in no way better.

Had I been there now, would I have written a book of this kind? I think I would have certainly done but then I would have been an outcaste. In the not too distant past, in the 1920s, a couple of men of art and letters, could never raise their heads inside the den—that was Coorg, and their writings were looked down as though nothing, and those writers had to fend themselves to be ignored by the people. That was no surprise when a medieval backward nation suddenly emerges into limelight with some local men wielding official power with an arrogant gait.

So when the top happened to be like that art and literature inevitably suffered at the lower level amidst

eynics, villains and all sorts of vicious hoards. However, when the abovesaid book came out through the efforts of one who was not so old and who was just dabbling with Kannada and not even with the A B C D of English, that was certainly like an explosion of a time-bomb. None of them had expected such a thing to happen and I still remember how some people felt at the sight of a book like that. That was certainly a pitiable sight. They also thought that it was audacious on my part to produce a book like that when they were not yet ready to absorb that shock. They would not even think that if comparatively a young man could bring out a handbook of that sort at that most inauspicious time, where would he be later on during the auspicious times! They never thought that way, and, in fact, they were incapable of thinking that way. Their angle of vision was very poor and even blurred. Their academic attainments were just hollow. In that way the villagers with their robust commonsense were no doubt a hundred times better. They saw that book and then declared in unmistakable terms that a writer of such a stuff and of that magnitude and with so much effort would one day go away and that he would never be there. They said so in my presence without knowing who I was. That seemed funny but that was true. It was in 1952-53.

Goorg, in spite of its past history, is a small, narrow, environmentally dry and atmospherically insipid place, and anyone that brings out a book like that certainly should have some tamerity, especially when the bandits were going about at that time. Of course, after that 'mushrooms' too began to grow there but that's a differ-

ent matter. I was feeling rather agitated and depressed not because of my own problems which were insignificant but due to the stalemate through which I had to go. With all that when I walked out of the job, let me make it clear that it was not wholly because of the Government of that blessed *Samsthaana* of Coorg of those days, that hoax of a Ramarajya, but due to my own reasons. I have tried to say things clearly here and that I did to see to what extent I could remember all that had happened. ,

That should not however be taken as the reason for my writing this memoir or for my being critical while stating facts. Let me make that also clear. I have not been as harsh as some people had been while talking about others all day and all night. In fact, with many that way of speaking about others is a regular pastime. What they secretly talked about others wagging their tongues one-thousand times a day, I wrote openly but once, and that's all I did. One should look into the journals like the Blitz, Current, Flame, Organizer, Swarajya, Mother India and scores of such papers. Those are all professional critics and very often they tell some bitter truth ! It is truth that is at stake and that's what those forth-right journals and writers try to salvage from the debris of the corrupt and immoral rut- which is our country today. I did not attempt to do anything like that nor am I capable of doing that, and yet I felt that someone sometimes should do things of the sort that I am doing now. I saw that before our own eyes a good lot of distorted filth is being produced and served to the people by some selfish and unscrupulous individuals. I feel certainly disillusioned. However, taking this opportunity of writing something about myself I like

to blast such works or productions into pieces. That's all I am doing here.

Of course, that's not all; I have said something more, I was never in the true sense of the term a student in any kind of educational institution built of brick and mortar. The world was my school and I am glad that it was like that. Therefore, let me state all that I saw and learnt at that so-called 'school', and here I limit this writing to Coorg only. I admire democracy and democratic systems which ought to be pure and noble both in content and form. In fact, I went in search of such a pure democratic way of life where I could breathe some fresh, pure and free air, and, at last I landed here. I am happy about that. Now without wasting any more words on those things, let me proceed to recollect my thoughts— just the stray thoughts.

3. TOPICS OF GENERAL INTEREST ONLY.

From this point ahead I shall be dealing with the various topics or issues of general interest only with which I was concerned or interested, agreed or disagreed, liked or disliked and so on, and all that I put here only if I feel that it would serve the general interest. If I talk about an incident or about an episode, my motive would be only to the extent of informing how I had viewed certain incidents and some people when I was there in Coorg or even from this distance. Suppose I discuss about a book or a person, I do it not out of personal interest but with a sense of responsibility. It would seem that I do it with a

frivolous sense of decrying the efforts of others, but, in fact, I am only giving a correct assessment of things as far as I could see them. I am aware of the circumstances through which I would be taken to task if I indulge in deliberately slandering people. I am scrupulously avoiding from becoming controversial even when I happen to speak about some people or some works in stronger terms. I appear to be blunt only if the things about which I speak deserved such appreciation or condemnation or whatever the case might be. Therefore, as one goes through these pages one is apt to find me going into some details on certain things. That I do only only to explain myself however distasteful that might be for others.

At the outset, I shall hit upon the book-entitled 'Kodavas'. Readers will judge whether it is fair on my part if I correct some mistakes which I know, were carelessly, at many places deliberately, and at some places spitefully committed by an ill-informed writer. I am sure that no one would like me to close my eyes and shut up after seeing all that and especially after the author of the book afforded to me an opportunity to speak out. Therefore, this narrative from page to page and cover to cover reads like the story of my own conclusions. But what I implore is that the readers should bear with me till the very end however unpleasant it may be. It is my privilege to speak out the truth to the best extent possible and it is my right to speak out in order to simply say what was what. By doing so, I am hitting the nail straight in order to put the things in a clearer perspective, After all there are printing presses these days to print anything that one would feel like doing so. Therefore, I too felt that why I

should not use that privilege when so many others are using for producing all sorts of cock-and-bull stories !

However, now I will plunge into the subject with the kind permission of the readers. "Kodavas- their Customs and Culture", is the title of the book—under review. What for these two words- Customs and Culture ?

Customs are generally accepted conventions which are put into practice consistently and devotedly, and those practices gradually become a part and parcel of what is called culture. Cult or cultivate, is an act of development, a conventional process, an individual or social discipline etc. Rituals observed, systems of worship, traditional values, manners, social conduct, language or dialect, a certain pattern of costumes, names etc, etc, form different roots and branches of the tree- called Culture. Similarly, songs, hymns, classics and all kinds of literary out-put are Scripture. Just like culture, scripture too embodies all that is written. As the word 'script' can denote anything written, the word cult' embraces every thing that man follows on the basis of conventions, ethical principles and moral obligations. Therefore, if one gives a caption such as 'Customs and Culture', it would be like saying 'Branches and Tree', when after all, the branches are just the parts of a tree.

The author of the book, 'Kodavas', says that he is no master of English language ; nor do I, but when one ventures to write in any language these sorts of misleading captions or titles for the book together with its attractive get-up seem as though a mythological Mohini who appeared with tantalizing beauty and charm when actually she was just a hoax. Is this book also something like that ?

4. AN ILLUMINATING FOREWORD

General K. M. Cariappa, in his illuminating and spirited foreword to the book, 'Kodavas', wrote, that :

"Of late there has been a long felt need for a book of this kind ...to remind the Kodava youth of today their glorious heritage.....The world is progressing with 'Sputnick' speed; in science. Man is getting increasingly 'materialistic' minded..... If the millions of our Mother India dressed alike, danced alike, sang alike, performed the ceremonies of their weddings, births, festivals, funerals and so on in the same uniform manner there will inevitably be a great set back to India's culture"

Gen. Cariappa is certainly true to his ardent and sincere love and faith for his culture when he says that :

"Our Kodava customs are fascinatingly unique. Our Kodava dress- of our men and women- are picturesquely dignifying. The various folk-songs..... are all so singularly meaningful and so educative to remind ourselves of the glory of Kodava culture.....".

Cariappa's very sensible and far-sighted ideas drew the attention of good many reviewers of the book in the Indian newspapers, when especially he said so nobly and so eloquently that :

"It will be a bad day for the future cultural progress of our Mother Land (if we fail to adhere to our customs). We will all then become mere 'robots.' The five-hundred million people of this ancient land of ours cannot live a life of complete uniformity. It is just impossible and it is certainly NOT desirable."

His concluding words are also equally touching. He said that ;

"If India's culture is to be kept great, every single community of Indians must keep up its own customs, traditions, dresses, music, dances, festival and social ceremonies intact, but remaining *Indians*, one-hundred percent, at all times."

Thus it was characteristic of such a gentleman with noble ideas and ideals to pour forth words— rather profusely, in appreciation of the Indian culture in general, and the Kodava culture in particular. About the book, 'Kodavas', he said, that :

"This book.....written in such simple language and so informatively by its author is indeed a 'God-Send' to our youth of today".

This 'foreword' is two pages and eight lines long, and it is written with utmost sincerity. Cariappa yearns that his culture should be accepted, admired and followed by all the Kodavas steadfastly, and in a wider sense, he appeals to the various other communities to honour and follow their respective traditional values. Therefore, anyone offering him any work that could fulfil his desire to some extent, or to a great extent, he appreciates them and shows his generosity both in his feelings and words. When one is thirsty and nowhere he could get even a little water, he would at once find one offering him something to quench his thirst. That thirsty man would then thank the one who offered him water, praise him, flatter him and then he would even say that he was actually a 'God-Send' to quench his thirst.

Similarly, General Cariappa, an ardent lover of good values, has done well in his excellent 'foreword' to the book 'Kodavas'. It is with that same spirit, he allowed

himself to say that the author of the book, was "indeed a 'God-Send', "has done yeoman's service", "taken infinite pains", has done "a splendid service" and so on.

Cariappa is a distinguished soldier and very rarely such men show a sincere love towards their culture and in that he is an exception among the soldiers in India. But one should know that in the western countries there are many soldier scholars, artists and painters and scientists and archaeologists and explorers.

However, what I am now saying is that I am a *common* man- not so good a speaker, not so good a writer, not so good a bluffer not so good a lover of our culture, and finally not so competent a person to review a work which was described in the above terms. But when one says that works of that kind were 'God-send' to our youth, I should feel that our youths should rule the roost today because that was all what I really see in the book or books about which I am speaking now, and even that I do it in the interest of that same youth.

I say only this, and that is that I am aware of my limitations. I have gone through the work entitled 'Kodavas- their Customs and Culture'. I have tried to get a copy of the book for a long time, after failing to get the same from the author himself. I generally see every piece of writing on the subject I am interested in and when they are not worth it, sometimes I speak out. That's however my right.

One of those men named in that book has testified that the author took to journalism after 1942, but I may say that it is not true. That author has not correctly informed the people about himself. I know that he was in

that press where he was working long before that but what he was doing there was a different matter. How did this man persistently kept on fooling and debunking those pork eating lot (of course, I too included) unless they were themselves a party for so many kinds of fraud and blackmailing techniques? Anyway that man knows that I have been telling him since at least last ten or twelve years to stop his sneaky and stealthy ways.

I may here warn or caution the kindly readers not to misunderstand me or cast insinuations on me. I am a poor fellow, and poor lover of culture. I am not enamoured to call unnecessarily a spade a spade, nor do I take delight in doing that, because I know it hurts people. However, now I must say that I beg to differ from Gen. Cariappa's observations about the book although I too welcome any number of books written on Kodava culture and I am as much interested in the subject as anyone else. Let there be no mistake about it.

5. 'LITERARY CAREER' DUE TO 'GENEROUS SOULS'—?

Writing a preface of seven long pages, the author of the book 'Kodavas', said that :

"It is gratifying to say that Coorg has a galaxy of rich men who know the right use of their wealth. But for these generous souls and their continued encouragement, my literary career would have faded long back".

This sounds like a peculiar 'literary career' that picks up inspiration to write only when some generous help is offered in a tray. He also said, that :

'This book would not have seen the light of the day but for their help.'

Yes, it is also good to be a newspaper editor in a small place like that so that those 'generous souls' can at least get some sort of rebate in the form of publicity for their charity. This author, however, looks like a court writer because of the continued help rendered to him due to which he undertook the job, otherwise, he wouldn't have done that. This time he found this subject 'culture' profitable. Apart from those 'generous souls', he said, the Goorg Education Fund and the Kodava Samaja also rendered him monetary help. Two other patrons who wished to remain anonymous have helped him with loans and due to all this, he said, it 'enabled him to bring down the price of the book' of 224 pages to a sum of Rs. 10/- a copy in 1967. It's a nice joke, however.

He gave some more information through a pink coloured leaflet that he attached to the copies of his newspaper of the 2nd February 1968. According to that, he had a loan of Rs. 10,000. But it is not clear what for the loan was taken. Was it to buy a house? Anyway, by trading on 'culture' he sought to clear his troubles. He said that he cleared the loan of Rs. 5000 and also cleared half the amount of another loan of Rs. 5000. All this reads like a balance sheet of a defunct co-operative society. He also said that he had sold already 900 copies within six months - a record sale by an individual without the help of any professional book-seller. How much in all he got by all this trade together was, of course, a different matter.

But I am wondering about the printing cost that he incurred at the hands of that Sharada Press, Mangalore,

to get a book of 224 pages printed. The author who is also a newspaper man, has given to the poor people of Coorg (although they are rich in money) a very good account of himself and of his book that caused him to take a loan of Rs. 10,000 in addition to the 'generous help' he got from many leading men. He has been helped by the Kodava Samaja, and the Education Fund might have given him the loan, and these things are not clear in the pink paper. But what I cannot understand is why the Sharada Press of Mangalore should have been so unkind to the one like this so that he had to struggle to get resources from different sources as aid, as loan etc? All this the author had to do for printing and advertising his book both in white and pink papers. It is again not clear whether he paid anything to the Kodagu Co., for all those direct and indirect techniques of advertising of his book through that paper.

It does not end there. The pink paper said that the man had 700 copies of a Kannada book to sell, perhaps on the same subject. When was it printed? Is it the unsold copies of that ten-year old book which I had the honour to review and say that most of it was just the transcription of the 'Pattole Palame?' Look, that is how the older books are being molested by the people of this sort and without even acknowledging all that, and they do it dressing their productions with fake pictures.

However, the editor of a local paper or journal, had planned to hit two birds—one old Kannada bird and the other new English bird, at one shot. It is good that the 'generous' people, though ignorant of this sort of world of trade respond to this kind of call for obvious reasons

The fact that this editor could sell away 900 copies of his book within six months is a good record. But the local people helped him having the interest of culture of theirs in mind and many others did so having the editor in mind. They would even accept copies if sent by postal parcel and without any previous intimation to them by the sender. Yes, an editor can sell books easily which can't be done so quickly even by professional book-sellers or publishers.

It is all right. But I may ask how much this author knew of the subject about which he wrote. This I ask because none of his books reveal the fact that he knew anything of what he wrote. He says that he received 'continued encouragement' from many for his little and small books and to that book of 224 pages. Then he also circulated a pink paper appealing people to buy books which would serve as 'wedding gifts'. So, this 'God-sent' man certainly knew how to 'make' books and sell copies.

However, I may revert to what I said in the beginning that a 'literary career' not taken out of inherent urge and with a love for culture, would only be just a hoax played on the 'generous souls'. And that was done from inside a newspaper den for he knows everyone likes to get publicized by paying money to newspaper men on some plea or the other.

However, it would have been nice if one had realised that to work on that subject of culture the essential requisites are a natural love and an urge to sacrifice oneself to work patiently and steadfastly with a spirit of dedication. It is not a thing that one can suddenly think of writing something with an eye on pecuniary

benefit or just out of spite with the help of three or four books and without even taking any trouble to turn over the pages of some books that were already there. I know that court writers and paid agents get up books within no time and get them attractively bound and then collect money from their masters or patrons. And, there are, of course, many publicity concerns which produce books purely on pecuniary motives. Anyway, I am not able to say that to which category could this book 'Kodavas' be included. Seldom do the people give a correct account of themselves.

6. THIS IS NOT A PLEASANT DUTY

This looks like that by the way I am taking this narrative in the pages ahead. This also seems like picking up from the book of a fellow-writer some black spots here and there. Anyway I have to do that because of the facts I am presenting in this text in greater detail. This should not be taken as fault-finding or mud-slinging. What I am saying is only a simple, honest and straight-forward review of the material that was before me. I have taken pains to substantiate all that I say, and in the end, I am giving some more what I saw. So let me now discuss some of the statements such as these to begin with. It is said by the author, in his preface, that :

“From its long history of comparative oblivion and isolation, Coorg was brought to lime-light by the two distinguished generals it gave.”

While releasing the book at a calculated and shrewdly arranged meeting by the author himself, on the 1st June 1967, one of the gentlemen seemed to have said that :

“ Because of the famous generals of Coorg, this small and never so far known race of Kodavas came to the forefront and thus they came to be known all over. ”

These statements are not true. To say that Coorg was known to the outside world only after the two generals of Coorg rose up in their military career from 1944 onwards, is an error as well as ignorance, although the statement could be partly correct.

Coorg or Kodagu, and Kodavas, were already in the limelight not only in India but even in Europe in the end of the 18th century itself. Many European and Persian records carried the stories of the exploits of these people. Even Hyder Ali was one of the admirers of the Kodavas about 200 years back, and this land was best known in India as early as 1780. From the time Gen. Abercromby got the Raja of Coorg to a treaty and took possession of this strategic district, Coorg had become a native state and that was in 1790. It was mentioned by all the British historians who wrote the entire history of India for the first time in those days, and they included Pennant, Mill, Elphinstone, Mark Wilkes and many others. Furthermore, it should be said that two of the outstanding men of the British history, Col. Wellesley, that famous duke of Wellington, later the Prime Minister, in 1801, and Winston

Churchill, later also the Prime Minister of England, visited Coorg in the end of the last century. The annexation of Coorg in 1834 was only a tame affair. The British wanted to kick out the Raja on the complaints of his own people because he was cruel, murderous and stubborn, and that was all about that.

By that time, Coorg, as a small province under the Central government of India was well-known to all constitutional experts and educated men all over India and Europe. From 1860, Coorg was the much talked of subject in South India and even at the central legislatures. The historians of the last century, like Cassell, Wheeler, Beveridge, Vincent Smith and others have given a glowing account of Coorg. The last Raja's visit to England and his activities there, caused a sort of commotion among the enlightened people, and he even wrote an article in the 'Morning Post', captioned, 'Christianity in India'.

Long before the Rajendraname was got written by the elder Viraraja, English officials like Mahoney, Wilkes, and Walsh, and later, Connor, Moegling, Cole and Richtor have carried the name and fame of Coorg all over India and Europe. Moegling and Richtor wrote about Coorg in German language also. It is true that we and our ancestors were then uneducated and did not know the world that was beyond our own villages. I read an article some time back written by Guggu saying that he saw for the first time Coorg being mentioned in the history written by Vincent Smith. Like this man most of us are apt to mis-read things and betray our stark ignorance of facts, and that kind of ignorance is dangerous today

because writers with 'no academic qualifications as such' would also repeat such mistakes and mislead everyone.

The recent history, the legislative council of 1924, Viceroy Lord Irwin's visit in 1929 and Mahatma Gandhi's visit in 1933 and such things are wellknown, and I need not recount all that here.

The observations of some people, I should rather reluctantly say, are due to ignorance of historical facts. Those who were selected to the Army in the early years of this century would themselves not agree to an opinion like that because they know that they were selected when they were college boys, and only on the basis of the representation that Coorg had in those days. What made that so tiny province to be so influential and in lime-light was exactly the history of our ancestors. A small province picked up two boys for the Army in 1918, and a huge Madras presidency of those days also picked up only two or three boys at the same time. How come?

Therefore, the truth of all this is in the colourful history of our ancestors, and also due to the admiration the British had for the race. The street talk based on ignorance could hardly be the right thing to be incorporated in a book written with 'infinite pains' although I am aware, since 1944, Coorg was more in the limelight because of those two Kodava Brigadiers, and later generals.

Apart from that interesting piece of writing where the 'gist' in English of the Kodava songs are given, I failed to find any honest or sincere work in any of the pages of the book, 'Kodavas'. Even those song collections are not complete nor satisfying. The author failed to

make use of the reference material that was right in front of him and then acknowledge doing so. But to do all that one should have a broad and generous bent of mind as an author taking 'infinite pains', which pains he has not taken nor capable of taking.

Let me here state that I had to search from page to page for some original work or ideas. Even where he tried to give his own versions, he had gone wrong due to his own way of writing some hypocritical blurbs. That, on the whole, seemed to me as an amateurish effort. Can't help. As I turned over the pages, I landed at the last section, 'Rumination'. What exactly the idea of 'Rumination' there, I could not follow, but then I read it. The author should not have taken the trouble to narrate the historical sequences because most of the statements are absolutely wrong. Some of the statements are just the guess work. I have dealt with all that separately at the pages ahead. The sections on marriage, festival, funeral and other ceremonies and rituals include very many insignificant items that are not followed anywhere today, and a detailed account of all those have taken some pages, but, as he said, none of the facts given there are original. Then why not those earlier works be reprinted ?

Many ear-say things and beliefs have found place in that book, and most of what is said are not customary now even in certain villages where they might have once existed. Betel chewing (Page 51) is not purely a Kodava practice although they introduced that lately as the rest of the Hindus, and in the old Coorg songs there is only one solitary reference was made to that. Vibhuti (Page 183)

paste is a Lingayat custom, and on the dead body the Kodavas generally sprinkle turmeric and sandal paste although they might use 'Vibhuti' now.

Kodava dialect (Page 179) need not be called just 'Kodagu'. It can be called Kodavaame or just 'Kodava Thakk'. Suggi (page 69) is entirely a non-Kodava folk art and festival, and the Kodavas even today have no idea as to what it is. It is said that the gold coin (Page 55) is placed on the mouth of the dead person and it is called 'batte-pana'. I am afraid, here I miss the point because Kodavas usually stick coin on the forehead of the dead. Also the explanation that it is for onward journey may be one view but not widely accepted. In the ancient days they had no concept of 'onward journey' as going by bus or car, and to go to heaven they needed only spiritual fare and not in coins. That coin placed on the forehead of the dead is symbolic of his status in life. If a poor man dies just a small silver coin would be placed and the rich would have the gold coin and so forth. Then again, 'Kai-Bai Vothatha', is one of the very symbolic, meaningful and amusing expressions. "Are you satisfied, and, shall we get up?" may be the idea it connotes, but the literal translation of that beautiful expression could be: "Did the hand and mouth agree (to stop eating)?"

These are some slipshods here and there. The pure Kodava culture is fast waning today and one who writes about it should certainly go deep into the past and then get forth the stuff with the support of the past records. Some incorrect conclusions formed on the basis of ear-say evidence should not have been allowed to creep into the book if one had taken 'pains' to do a work of the sort.

7. ATROCIOUS BUNGLING OF WORDS

Here I should say that the author of the book, 'Kodavas' has indulged in making some sweeping statements which are not at all fair to him or to the culture about which he spoke. In page 2 of his book, he said :

"Kodavas don't like to live in groups with a cluster of houses like the people of plains."

Let me simply say that this statement is wrong. The fact that the Kodava families of the same clan lived under one roof and built up a successful joint family system is an age-old theme. Those who did not live in groups are only the twentieth century folk and they had to do it because of the change of economic structure and due to the modern conditions. This change-over began from about last one-hundred years, and the individuals left their 'Okka' residence and built up 'Koppa' surroundings far and near.

At page 7, he said that "Kodavas believed in joint families". This is one of the many instances to show that he was not at all sure of what he was saying though he just copied down much of the sentences from other texts. He called the 'Iyn' houses 'massive structures'. This is an exaggerated way of writing things. There were hardly half a dozen 'massive structures' in Coorg in the last century. For want of space in those 'massive structures' they used to build houses all round the 'Iyn' houses, and, on the whole they lived in groups in the cluster of houses. This is the basic truth of the Kodava family life.

Joint family system, was the life and soul of the Hindu life in general and the Kodava cult in particular. Simply to say that Kodavas 'believed', means— is it that they never lived together under one roof in the Nads? Anyway, it is now wellknown that the modern economic conditions have made the individuals selfish and they behave as cut-throats of each other, but, that apart, true culture flowed from the joint family system of the past, and it is 'they' as one unit fostered as well as performed all rituals and customs about which we talk today and write books.

Moreover, that man is fond of one M. N. Srinivas who picked up the subject of Kodava life and customs for his academic consumption, and who put in a term known as "Religion..... of Coorgs". Perhaps, following that author, this local dabbler too said the something like "Religious concept of Kodavas", in page 41 of his book.

This term 'religion' in this context of Kodavas, is a misnomer. M.N. Srinivas probably misunderstood the explanation given to him by the late Karavanda Chengappa, a former Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Director of Land Records, etc, of Coorg, in the 1930s, and who was a 'religious' bachelor himself. Moreover, that M. N. Srinivas wrote a book captioned as such, and he minced the whole thing in such a way, it is difficult to say if he can himself say what after all he wrote. Anyway, his analytical study of the social structure beginning from 'Okka' makes a good reading, but all that information was furnished to him by Karavanda Chengappa who was then in Mysore.

However, what is this religion in Kodavas or any

other communities? All customs and manners and rituals observed in good faith by the people, whoever they may be, are religious. The various names of religions are just the symbols and the common man has nothing to do with them. Man need not know that he is religious. If he follows his social and ethical customs in good faith he is religious and name of the religion has nothing to do. Kodavas too are religious and the sociologists might say that they are Hindus because their rituals coincide with the Hindu rituals, but Kodavas are said to be distinct because some of their customs and manners seem to be of high quality and meaning, and these are akin to the customs of the ancient civilized races of North-west India and South-west Asia, and the facts concerning all this, I had tried to say in my book of 1953, at the Chapters 33 to 37.

However, what the sociologists are saying is about the Kodava customs, their way of life, their social build up etc though much of it had been waning due to those arrogant wealthy folks who are not aware of what they are doing. However, let me state that good behaviour or character is also religion but it has no name. All that is good has the stamp of religion and there need not be an effort to confuse the issue saying, "Religion among the Coorgs" as though they are different from the others. What is different among them is their way of life, their rituals, their manners, their dress, their etymology etc. These differences were at once spotted out by the British statesmen of the last century and they must get the credit for fostering the cultural aspects of this community.

However, on the basis of the groundwork done by the

British in the earlier days, modern writers tried to build up some solid and some superficial structures. The author of the book, 'Kodavas' who had never known what he was writing indulged in a guess-work like this and that seemed to be just amusing. He simply said, that :

"When compared to others, Kodavas are not very religious as far as the ritualistic observance is concerned".

This unfounded and not so sensible type of saying is quite wrong. A modern Kodava or a Brahmin or anyone else may not observe all rituals but if he is good in heart and fears God, he is religious. Observance of rituals is a way of life to be followed and if it is followed steadfastly as some orthodox people do, the cult or the culture prevails. Culture and religion are contributory to each other. Non-observance of rituals does not rob one's religion. Religion is faith that is rooted in goodness but rituals could be followed by any rascal and that makes him an orthodox follower of faith. The fanatics in every religion are a sort of cruel people but they certainly follow rituals. They need not be religious thereby. A man may give a polite smile or grin and that is his ritual but he might not be a good man, and, therefore, he is not religious. The fanatics in a way foster culture but God would not like their ways. In that way, culture is a convention in vogue and religion is goodness in heart. One expects a man of culture to be good also but that is a different matter.

Therefore, it is confusing if one mixes culture and

religion without being clear of what he is saying. To illustrate again, I am in a foreign country and I don't follow any of my caste rituals, and that does not mean I am not religious. My religion and my faith are in my heart whereas my culture and performance of that through rituals, are in my hands. It is safer to depend on what is in the heart rather than the one in the hand. What I say is that what is in the hand, our culture etc, have to be rightly used. To say that 'Kodavas, as far as the ritualistic observance of religion is concerned, are not religious', is atrocious bungling of words, facts and even sense. It does not denote anything.

8. THIS LOOKS LIKE JUST HYPOCRICY.

I must state here that I have to call a spade a spade. The author of the book, 'Kodavas' tells that his book holds 'a mirror to reflect the colourful life of Kodavas'.

I am afraid, it is not.

Then he said that he "cannot claim that book as an original contribution" on the subject. That is true; it is not an original contribution. He also added that he had "drawn copiously from many authors-both dead and alive". This statement is partly true and partly false.

I have already said that the original contributions to the subject were made by the European writers of the last century. It was the result of their direction that brought out the 'Pattole Palame' which deserved a second edition now. But this man, even without seeing all those Kodava

customs anywhere around him simply took to copy down from the earlier works, first in Kannada and then in English, and then put his own name to it. Then we call all that books. What books?

On the whole, this author of that fictitious picture book derived inspiration to undertake the work or a sort of 'literary career' merely perhaps on some mercenary interests, and that's what it was when I saw his accounts of the money that he gathered as loans and aids with the help of 'the generous souls', who perhaps, yearned to get themselves known as such. Drawing 'copiously' and yet factual errors in every line, particularly in the latter half of the book, was the hallmark of his inefficient writing. What to do? He might turn back and ask me, How efficient are you, after all?'

In the past, why, even this time, he had drawn facts from my book, but very sneakily. But he knows that he does not want to get into trouble at the hands of the author of that book, who had to warn or reprimand him not to steal or violate copy-right in the way he did.

I may put it rather bluntly to the man who got the book 'Kodavas' out, as to why the hell did he ignore the other book which has been referred to by many famous historians, by the Government chroniclers and by the Indian historical bulletins, and which work has also been able to obtain international recognition. I should ask the man in all fairness that why he should be so venomous about that book which was right in front of him and from which he drew 'copiously' and sneakily too, but did not allow himself to be understood by others that he had indulged in

that nasty game not once but many times ?

Well, a local petty writer trying to ignore that work means that there was something seriously wrong with the man. But I should here simply echo what some friends of mine had written to me in the simplest of the terms that it was the jealousy of the man that made him to ignore my book. But look, how much his crude jealousy and perversion had cost him ? He has to go through the hell of it and in 'quest' of his own 'eternal' hell ! There is no other go.

Some of the things that he said as 'running commentaries' in his book had no relevance at all to the subject on which he was writing. His only object was to write, either relevant or irrelevant, right or wrong, original or borrowed, stolen or adulterated, and like all expert traders, he dressed it gorgeously. Anyway that's alright. But what I see in it is different. Most of it looks like sheer bluff, and some of them I will be pointing out now in this work.

It is not fair to drag in the names of 'the great sons of the soil' who 'personify Kodava culture' into this work after obtaining their certificates, because there are others who would not excuse such distorted and misleading statements on subjects concerning the recent past. The author has obtained a testimony by a retired officer but he has not given a correct account of himself to the latter.

I can understand the mistakes committed due to the reason of there being no authenticated records : I can also understand the language mistakes, printing mistakes, or mistakes of some sort in the books of that kind. After

all, it is a record that one is supposed to create and if those records happen to be misleading and self-contradictory and adulterated in contents, any amount of attractive get up of the book just for business purposes and wedding gifts, would not save the writer from his fraudulent and spiteful behaviour. Most of us wish, as some people had wished, that the youth of today and of all times, should be rightly guided, but the hypocritical individuals of this sort are not the people to do that. Their place should be somewhere else. They can take to the 'quest' of eternity through maternity process or to some sort of politics from inside a cellar where they could play some hide-and-seek game.

9. 'A PEEP INTO THE ORIGIN'—WHO PEEPED?

I have to be again very strong on this point of the origin of the Kodavas. The author of the book, 'Kodavas' has written three or four pages on this and quoted six or seven earlier writers including some *Archakas*, but none of them threw any light on the subject except saying that Kodavas are a fine race. What fine race if fellows like these hopelessly cheat the rest of that 'fine race'? Fr. Heras assumed that they 'must have been living in the plains of the Indus': Then again some more quotations, and some idiots say that he has peeped into the subject. Peeped where and into what? He said:

"These divergent views (I don't think they were divergent)..... add confusion.....The above citations

amply prove (How could the divergent views prove the much discussed point?) that they belong to no anthropological groups of South India.....The claim that they are the descendants of the brachyaephalic stock which lived in the Indus valley during the Mohenjadaró period seems to be more tenable in view of the anthropometric similarity between the two". (Between the which two?)

What a *Thamaasha* is this? What does this mean? From where did he copy down the astounding words like 'brachyaephalic', 'anthropometric' etc? Does he know what all that means? Did he at least know what exactly he was writing without, of course, understanding himself? Elsewhere he said that:

"Some of the educated Kodavas claim that they are the descendants of the Indo-Aryans and some others assume that they are Kshatriyas."

Who assumed what, when and where? What a horrible way of hoodwinking the blessed people who could never understand the trick of this kind of writings! Readers must bear with me for criticising one who had never seen any of the original writings of those men and yet goes on saying all that through his head.

However, while releasing his book on the 1st June 1967, a couple of old men of Mercara seemed to have said as given below, according to the Kodagu Weekly. Whether they actually said that or the author himself who was also the editor of the paper, wrote like that for his own publi-

city, they alone could say. One man seemed to have said that :

" What interested me most in this book, ' Kodavas ' is the authenticated explanation that the author gave on the subject of the origin of Kodavas.....No one had told us so far all about that. This book has thrown useful light on that."

On what? This is nonsense! There is not even a dim light there despite my intense search for some kind of light. But I think that the man who said so would not make such a mistake. I presume, the author himself, who is clever in bluffing even in print, might have given the version as said by an elderly man at the meeting because such things would have a good market value. The quotations given in the book are thrown out of context but most of those words of the earlier writers are the description of the race and not an account of their origin. Anyway, I never knew that books could be produced so easily with big founts and thick paper to afford some bulk in order to cheat laymen and women and ignorant street peddlars. I am really puzzled. Let no one misunderstand me for saying all this.

Here again I must ask that author of the book, ' Kodavas ' why he deliberately avoided to refer to my book. It would have been better if he had referred to it in the interest of the subject on which he was writing. But what to do? The man was terribly vicious; he would only slyly use that book and not openly.

Yes, I understand his difficulty apart from his malice. He had no courage this time to take or steal a single line

from that book. What he did was that he took the names of those ethnologists named in the book, 'A Tiny Model State' and then searched for their books. But where to search? He searched his cellar and managed to get one or two books from which he blindly quoted a couple of sentences, and the rest he left. Leaving like that and running away was more heroic a feat than quoting from a book, mentioning that author's name etc, in his gorgeously dressed up prostitute-the coloured production. That's all what one can do if one was not sure of what he was doing or writing. However then, some people seemed to have understood that it was my book that gave him most of the stuff and those friends directed me to get a copy of this coloured book and see immediately, and that I did, and now here I write. Of course, why should I spare him?

If anyone has said that no one had done any study on the origin of the Kodavas, then the fellow who said that must have been a blind mug. That man must have then not seen my book which gives a closely printed ten-page report on the subject with illustrations and statistical information from many sources-not tapped so far by anyone. After a very exhaustive treatment of the subject, I concluded the topic at page 307 of that book-as below :

"It remains for the future historians to make further amends and come to a conclusion that is most acceptable, but it looks to be a remote wish in view of the fact that local conditions are fast changing and obliterating ancient landmarks under all heads known to science.

That's what I said. But the man in the other book ignored all that and tried to bluff just in a page or two on the same theme and then said that :

" The various efforts made to dig out (who made efforts to dig out?) the origin of the Kodavas have not met with any success, (That's not true) and the questions; viz—who are the Kodavas, whence and when they came to Coorg are yet to be solved. (This man is sneakily echoing what I had said elsewhere).

I find in all these kinds of writings on subject in which the writer is totally ignorant, a kind of literary blackmail. The fellow wanted to hide the Chapter 33 of the book, A Tiny Model State of South India, after probing into every word of every page of that book. That he and his grand-fathers who also copied down from that book had to do, but I am only referring to the hypocrisy of this man who wanted to simply mislead and cheat all his readers including those few old fogies who spoke about the book in the way they did. Well, let me now quote Lt. Connor who said on the subject of the origin of the Kodavas, that:—

" The Kodavas themselves do not know anything about their origin. There is no trace of any helpful material to find out their origin or anything even to deduce a reasonable and convincing assumption..... There is no doubt that Kodavas are one of the oldest races."

This 150-year old assertion and observation of an Englishman is true even today. What the subsequent

writers could do is only sneak into what those people said and thus show up. But in that show up if there is no intellectual honesty in writers, I may be allowed to repeat that it just becomes a literary fraud and nothing else.

10. WHAT IS THE RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE?

Listing all the items of customs and rituals and hurriedly jotting them down to make up some pages like the ones we see in the book-‘Kodavas’, is not that is wanted now. That out-moded way of stating things have failed to inspire people. What we need to know is the religious and ethical significance of each and every customary rite and traditional value.

I shall say the same thing in a different way. Mere repetitions of already recorded customs and manners do not help our youth or even the elders who are violating the ethical codes of behaviour. Mere reproductions of what has already been said looks like reprinting of the same thing under a different name. I have been saying this ever since I had known that trade of some people, and here again I say that. Books have been of no value these days, and what people need is some method to make them observe those valuable rituals which were evolved for self-discipline of men and women.

Kodavas are fast becoming a boorish community. They do not know about themselves, Mr. Connor said, and rightly too. They even try to discord the traditional pattern of names while naming their children, and use any word they find as suitable. In an article in The

Kodagu of the 22nd March 1968, there was an effort at playing a very dangerous role to destroy the entire social ethics by criticising the observations made by the others. I promptly rebutted all that as given in pages 143 to 160 of this book in order to make it clear that the hypocrisy of some so called writers is the bane of the society, and, indeed, it is tragic as well, which cause social degeneration wherein rascals flourish rather unashamedly.

What is required now for the development of culture of any community is a sense of understanding of values. The violation of traditional orders and systems which are a part and parcel of our heritage and which have flowed for centuries through many channels and in many forms, should be stopped, and preserved. All customs and rituals consist of deep significance—religious, ethical, mythical etc. Rituals were invented for self-discipline, but, alas, we are ignorant! It is ignorance fostered by wealth, that has caused the decline of culture everywhere. However, all that disregard for culture and convention is due to our own upstartism and cynicism. Those who say that times have changed, please note, are themselves the root-cause to destroy traditional values, and that's how they explain away their debauchery. Times have changed, indeed!

People write books and I too write sometimes. Some are professional and some just write for the sake of writing and then malign or misrepresent or blackmail the world around them to mislead society. Certainly I am a novice, on the whole. However, let me now say what I feel that I should say.

The book 'Kodavas' did not do justice for the

amount of money he collected and for the privilege he had-to be on the spot. Excepting those translations of the songs the rest of the pages contain only a list of the names rituals and customs and a little explanation on each of them, and those too are just translations. If he had taken the trouble to explain the significance of each of those customs, the value of the book might have been different. The whole thing seems to have been written in a slipshod way and it looks like an effort to spite the face of some one, and, in that too, he did not succeed either.

For instance, a topic like Ganga Puja could have been dealt with explaining the whole thing in at least ten pages if he had followed some source material like a brochure in Kannada, 'Kodava Samskriti' published in 1943. Similarly when he dealt with village festivals and village gods and their influence in Coorg life, he could have also followed the same book 'Kodava Samskriti' in which there are some original explanations.

What I am saying is that every ritual has significance and one could write pages if one writes things with some purpose. Before doing that one has to know what exactly one is writing and for whom one is writing. Just copying down from the other books means nothing. Productions with coloured pictures could only be to deceive people and not for anything else.

The man also says that, "As elsewhere Sri Rama and Sri Krishna are worshipped." This is just nonsense. This is wrong as far as Kodavas are concerned. This opinion is given because the man who wrote it failed to find out the significance of the Kodava festivals. Rama and Krishna

are the Hindu gods but for the Kodavas these gods appeared very recently through the Brahmin influence and through the colourful pictures and the ancient scripts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata and other stories. But the gods of the Kodavas are their own faith in their eldest or the original man 'Karanova', and also there are various other spirits or gods imported from the Malayalee influence as seen in the village temples, and they include Bhagavathi, Povvodi, Sarthaavu and so on.

Even now it is not clear what exactly the ancestors meant by Okka Parije, Makka Parije, Kutta Parije etc, and about their religious significance. The repetition of the words like Kanni Mangala, Bale Mangala, Nari Mangala and things like that have been always there and in all the books but what is missing again is the ethics that underlie in those rituals performed on those occasions. However, this man simply put all those words to fill up the pages of his book without meaning anything of that and without being able to say anything. That's indeed a deceptive joke.

11. THIS IS ABSOLUTELY NONSENSE :

Look, what the author of the book 'Kodavas' tells us about Dampathi Muhurtham in Page 114 of his book. He says that :

"Dampathi Muhurtham which takes place could be held at any time according to convenience."

I am sorry for the kind of writing of this type. For my part, I would sincerely and honestly conclude that this

man should not have ventured on a work like this. He has deceived everyone around him by this sort of writings. This can be called prostituting culture. I would only say to the readers not to be misled by these colourful and self-advertised productions that looks like the materials sold along with the pornographic pictures and books in the market places and gutters.

To say that Dampathi Muhurtham could be held at any time according to the convenience, means he is speaking about the weddings taking place anywhere and everywhere and at any time. What a pitiable way of explaining away of the things! What an effort to reduce an age-old cultural heritage to a markettable commodity! Did those men who had gone through the book consider these things and think that here was a man who did not know anything of what he was saying? Well, I may now simply begin to say something about this most divine and colourful ritual, Dampathi Muhurtham. Let me again quote from the page 327 of my own book which this man was afraid to refer to. There it is said that:

“Dampathi, Muhurtham is held almost at dawn, which moment is considered very sacred for the Devas and Rishis in the days of yore. The moment is also considered very auspicious in all Shastras, and it is at that time alone the world wakes up after its slumber. The rice strewing and presentation processes are repeated as before.....the groom raises the bride off the stool holding her hands with his. This act of taking possession of the bride constitutes the essential part of the function.....”

I may only say that every aspect of our culture and every minute item of rituals carry with it a very elaborate and symbolic Vedic and ethical significance. An explanation of such things is what is needed now and not this kind of carefree jottings of things that make little sense.

The author of the book 'Kodavas' simply gave the names of some rituals without himself knowing what those are all about. There is no effort at explaining at least some significance of any of those things. However, I may only touch upon a couple of instances for his inadequate and very poor writing on the subject. I said that he has only translated from other books—rather unashamedly, and without the least bit of thinking that he was committing a literary fraud. Here I shall touch upon a point that all of us know about the importance of the ritual of using Paal-kool, but what is the significance of that. To be brief, let me quote my own book, Page 324, wherein it was said that :

“Food is served with milk (to the bride and the groom) and that is considered as most auspicious and nutritious. Milk is a stuff, it is believed, that brings the bridal party to a close friendly and fraternal link and it is the Paal-kool that clears all enmity or ill-will that might have existed between the parties.”

If the significance attached to these rituals are not told at least to some extent, people need not have to take any of those things seriously. Simply listing of the things without saying 'what for' all those are observed

would transform the people to develop cynicism towards these rituals, I would like to cite another instance here about "Bale Birudu" and the significance attached to that ritual. I quote again from the Page 327 of the "Tiny Model State" where it is said as follows :—

* This is supposed to exhibit the physical fitness of the suitor which must be an essential requisite in him. Also this means an honour to the entire party, and hence it is known as Baale-Birudu. There is an anecdote which depicts this incident of cutting the plantain stumps. Manmatha, the god of Beauty and Love wanted to marry Rathi, the then most beautiful princess who had already been betrothed to another prince.—In the fight that ensued, Manmatha killed his rival suitor and married Rathi.....Here the plantain stumps represented the enemies of Manmatha.

Like this if all the rituals had been explained with appropriate stories and significance that consist in them, there was a chance for the people at least to appreciate what we call 'our culture'. It would be too long if I should quote or reproduce all those or even a few of those rituals and their significance that was already explained in the last four chapters of the book "Tiny Model State", the portions of which have been even translated into Malayalam and some other Indian languages with profound admiration to the culture as depicted there in that book.

A ritual like 'Polchi Paduva' has a significance that goes back to the Vedic days. The songs chanted on the eleventh day night after the day's ceremony, has a deep religious significance. The idea of those who sing eulogising

the dead throughout the night is an ordeal carried on to lead the soul of the dead person straight to heaven by the very force of their prayerful song. In the brochure "Kodava Samskriti" published in 1943, an attempt is made to introduce the deep ethical and spiritual significance of the Kodava songs "Balo-paat" and the philosophic tantrums that contain in them. Therefore, what is needed today for the people is not the sweeping generalisation of these things with their names and without any explanations, but an elucidation of each of those rituals and the sense and the meaning they connote.

The Author of the book 'Kodavas' says, that, "I am no master of English language". Well, no one said that he was a master of any language, but in writing a book like this on a subject that he does not know, it looks that he is not a student of even an elementary school of 'culture'. Excepting a few academicians, no out-sider need be interested in the Kodava culture. Therefore, the copies of the book generally go to internal consumption within Coorg, and I am sure, the people, and especially the 'youth of today' are to be satisfied with the coloured pictures given in that book because the rest of the things the man said there is an effort to paint the Coorg history and culture with tar and blacken it altogether. This he did especially after being financed by many generous people. However, this is not the place for me to cite everything what he said especially with regard to 'culture' of Kodavas although I agree that he has listed and translated the names and terms of rituals—some still observed and some obsolete.

12. ON 'JEWELLERY' AND 'MARTIAL' TRADITIONS

Most of the Kodava customs are in common with other Hindu customs, and where they differ is in the observation of rituals. For example, 'Terana' and 'Terana Mangala', 'Kanni Mangala', 'Kari-mani' and such items are all common Hindu customs, and in many respects they are Asian customs. Things like 'Terana' are observed by the Arabs and the people of central Asia.

And what remains to be told today is—the significance under which they are followed among the Kodavas, if at all they are doing so. All faiths and beliefs are backed up by strong power of reasoning and it is in that angle one should try to analyse the significance attached by the people who followed these customs. If that is not explained at least in brief, an effort of writing anything on these, becomes vague.

I had referred to the 'Jewellery' elsewhere stating that the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' has collected some pieces of information on this. But I am at a loss on this point when he says 'Peechey Kathi', 'Odi-kathi' and such other male ornaments (Page 35) are also jewellery. These 'Peechey Kathi', 'Odi-kathi' 'Thodang' etc are very important items of the Kodava armoury. They are not at all jewellery. They are the ancient war weapons and also used as defensive weapons by the people in those days when moving along in the jungle tracks. Those were also formidably used during the wars. As guns and swords are worshipped during the Keil Muhurtha festival, these weapons are honoured as

ornaments of a bridegroom during the wedding.

Even 'Gejje-Thandu' is one like the old mail-runners metal stick fixed with clinking rings so that the noise would keep the stray animals or bandits at a distance while they moved about in the jungle tracks. The old people in those times used sticks with 'Gejje' with the same idea with which the mail-runner used his ring-metal short stick. But then this inevitable stick also became an ornament to hold during the wedding and the bridegroom uses it when he goes through the performance of rituals. Therefore, I am afraid, these things could not be classified under jewellery and all this would come under Kodava armoury.

Under the heading 'martial traditions' in the book 'Kodavas' many more items are found left out. Most of the out-door activities of the Kodava ancestors were all performed with great significance that indicated martial qualities. To those which are already referred to in the book, I may add 'Pade Kali' and 'Paria Kali' (Page 39) as important items under that head. They are, no doubt, a mock warfare conducted along with the beating of drums and in a perfect order. That has also a touch of the ancient Persian culture. About 'Paria-kali', I may quote from the Page 340 of the book "Tiny Model State" to state that:

"After the dance (Hutri dance) the 'Paria-kali' is held where two of the combatants in each batch conduct the stick-play of offence and defence. All hits are to be below the waist and occasionally they take a serious turn. After a hard fight, the combatants like true sportsmen, embrace each other and depart.

Every item in this (Hutri) festival is reminiscent of the cultural traditions generated right from the days of heroic past

Those temple games and sport like 'Ethu-Porata', 'Kudure Ota', 'Tenge Poru' and such things were all conducted in 'Mand' or the temple courtyard, and they signified both ethical and sportive rituals played at the time of festivals. In essence they were all village pastimes but then they symbolised worship of gods, and in essence the rituals observed during the sport, signified martial qualities of the race.

It is such pieces of information that is most required now, are found missing in the book 'Kodavas'. Then what about the Kodava dances? Every kind of dance beginning from 'Bolakaat' of the males to the 'Umma-thaat' of the females are lovely, orderly and divinely in their very concept and performance. All these dances take place in temples and most of them scientifically conducted, and they are all both religious and semi-religious in their themes. The Hutri dance, or the 'Kolaata' of many kinds are indeed martial in content from end to end. On this Hutri dance, I quote from the book, "Tiny Model State", Page 340.

"This (Hutri) festival is fully national and not influenced by Brahminism. It is held for seven days. People of all villages and Nads, join at specified village or Nad centres known as 'Mand' (the temple courtyard) and conduct the festival and dances with the sounds of drums, horns and folk songs. Those classical dances are significantly remarkable, and certainly

martial in spirit and content, and every person of the village takes part in it."

"Bodu Neme" mentioned at the Page 79, of the book 'Kodavas' required some explanation. It resembles to some extent, the 'Holi' of North India although no sprinkling of the coloured water or powder, here. But on the side of the fun and frolic and the spirit in which the 'Bodu Neme' is conducted, it certainly goes along with the traditions elsewhere. Although the Kodavas in those days were an isolated community, all these kinds of festivals, rituals and customs depict the universality of man. Man is certainly a part and parcel of the world community and that is what is made known by the cultural traditions of the Kodavas, Yeravas, Kurubas, Brahmanas, Sikhs, Kayasthas, or any community of people all over India, nay of Asia.

The Author of the book 'Kodavas' has in his Preface (Page vii) brought Jawaharlal Nehru's name to give him a testimony to write about natural beauty of Coorg. But that man only admired the beauty of Kashmir and introduced it to the whole word with the problem he created there, It is better that Coorg remained intact without being reminded of Nehru's testimony. It is also said that he admired the beauty and complexion of the Kodava women, and the Author of "Kodavas" repeats this fact in Page 28 of his book. I personally don't think that the ex-Prime Minister ever knew to evaluate beauty by the way he admired the faces of the three 'K's, Krishna Menon, Kairon and Kamaraj, the three most 'handsome' faces of India that he had seen. Joking apart, I should say the scenic beauty of the Coorg landscape and grace and

At Page 192, it is said that "Viraraja assumed the name of Doddaviraraja." This is wrong. The people and the later historians called him 'Dodda', senior, and his brother's son who later became the last Raja, was called Chikka-Viraraja. In all this, the Author's stubbornness in refusing to follow "Tiny Model State" and other available books, is evident. But he should not mislead people. This is not politics. This is a sacred task of recording.

Again in Page 192, it is said that Dewan Apparanda Bopanna, with some men....welcomed Col. Fraser after being sent by the Raja.

But the actual fact is that the Dewans convinced the Raja to surrender on account of the British army strength. With Bopanna, another influential member of the Raja's cabinet to welcome the British was Dewan Laxminarayana, although this man was sorry for what had happened. Laxminarayana was a supporter of the Raja.

In the same vein, the Author of the book 'Kodavas', writes that : "The British put forth the lame excuses and under the plea that the people of Coorg were against him (the Raja), took over administration."

This is not true either. The truth is that the Raja was against himself by his stubborn behaviour. The British would have retained him as a native ruler if he had behaved well. Though not all the people of Coorg, a powerful section of the Kodava population were definitely against him. The inevitable differences between the Kodavas and the non-Kodavas had already prevailed at that time, and the Kodavas showed little respect to a Lingayat ruler. A section among the Kodavas welcomed the British.

At Page 193 of the book 'Kodavas', it is said that "Viraraja was depicted (by the British) as a tyrant who had no backing of the people."

Yes, reliable records are there to show that Viraraja was bad enough to be called a tyrant under the influence of his cruel minister Kunta Basava. Therefore, he had lost the backing of the influential section of the Kodavas. The British versions are not exaggerated. There is truth in most of what they said. Even Robert Cole's inspection of the site of murder of the members of the royal family, is correct. There are records in support of the fact that the Raja and particularly, Dewan Basava, were bad enough to meet the fate they had.

The Page 194 of the book, 'Kodavas', contains serious errors and they give the impression that the Author gathered all those from out of loose talks. He says, that "when the British assumed power they gave certain assurances."

This is not correct. There was no assurance given in 1834 excepting Col. Fraser's 'proclamation' which says :

"The inhabitants are hereby assured that they shall not again be subjected to native rule, that their civil and religious usages will be respected and that the greatest desire will invariably be shown by the British Government to augment their security, comfort and happiness."

The British were true to this assurance till the end and they did give "security, comfort and happiness" to Coorg, nay to the whole of India. That is indeed 'God-Send' and apart from that I personally could not find anything 'God-Send' happening in our country.

To say that the British assured that "the Kodavas would be exempted from the operations of the Indian Arms' Act," is wrong. When did they say that? This was not at all thought of in 1834. It was only after twenty-five years they considered this issue and the reason for this was kept secret till recently. Anyway, Sir Mark Cubbon was responsible for that in 1860-61.

The next assurance that "a Kodava would be appointed to the post of the District Magistrate", is again a school boy's howler.

The British were not fools to give such an assurance to the people whom they just conquered or brought to subjection. Only after 1860 or so they began talking about that in the all India level, but not in Coorg. Till about 1880, nowhere in India they offered the posts of District Magistrate to an Indian as it is a prize-post of the administration of law and order. Then they began to select very carefully some Indians and appointed them, but in Coorg it took a much longer time, and only in 1922, Dewan Bahadur K. Chengappa had the honour to become the first Indian District Magistrate.

It is also said in the book, 'Kodavas' that "Col. Fraser enacted a drama of make-believe at Mercara of ascertaining the wishes of the people at a meeting to which only their henchmen were invited."

This is again an unfair statement, and it looks like that this man was writing something about the Congress politics of today.

The meeting that took place under the orders of Col. Fraser was attended by almost all the 'Thakkas' of all the Nads of those days and some other influential headmen.

There were non-Kodava representatives also. The three Dewans, Bopanna, Ponnappa and Laxminarayya took trouble to summon headmen from all quarters. The meeting was held in the ground down the Mann's Compound near the old and, now erased guest house of the Rajas. Of course, as 'henchmen' of the British it is natural for them to support the winning horse when considerable number of the non-Kodavas were still wondering why they could not reinstate Raja. There was a definite split among the Kodavas and others then and that burst out into open rebellion in South Kanara and North Coorg. But Col. Fraser's meeting was perfectly in order. By then he had already learnt Kannada and he could follow what each of those blokes were talking or abusing each other.

The announcement that "as to the wishes of the people they assumed the administration" is perfectly alright. Even in Fraserpet, the Dewans had mustered strong support for the British and thus left the Raja in Nalknad to rule the roost. All those things were perfectly done and constitutionally well-done, and in a much better order than what is being done today by Indians themselves as free citizens.

To say that Viraraja the Younger was "a lover of freedom" is just an imagination. It could be said that he was an unfortunate victim of evil forces that surrounded him. As all Indian chiefs of those days, he was also selfish. His concept of freedom was only to retain his throne and not beyond that. Lord Bentinck actually wanted to have him as one of the native rulers, but this Raja did not behave well and he did not know how to fight for his freedom. He was selfish and the British found out plenty of evidences to his palace intrigues and conspiracy with the neighbouring

nayaks and other chiefs. By that time he had already lost support of the influential people. It was the Kodavas who were freedom loving. They could not digest the idea of remaining under a Lingayat ruler and his oppressive Lingayat and Brahmin Dewans. There were plenty of reasons for all this.

I am aware of the fact that in India our people in the Governments both at the Centre and in the States are trying to raise the prestige of those Indian rulers like Rani of Jhansi and many others as fighters for freedom. They select scholars to get books written about these people and call all these people like Hyder, Tipu, Nizam, Jansi Rani, and ever so many Nayaks and Nawabs as fighters for freedom. But the truth is that those fellows fought, firstly for the support of the British and yet continued intrigues, secondly, they fought to retain their respective states or territories and then continued to quarrel with their neighbours, thirdly, when their powers were further reduced they tried to retain their throne and lastly they tried to retain their own lives. No where one could see any concept of freedom in any of these chiefs but only self interest. And, the Raja of Georg was also one like that.

14. SOME MORE WRONG IMPRESSIONS.

At Page 193, of the book 'Kodavas', it is said that :

" It was a common feature of the British policy whenever they wanted to annex a territory the existing rulers were blackmailed with charges of cruelty, bad administration etc. "

This has not been the case always. I too had presumed

that the Indian rulers of the time of the East India Company were all good and they were blamed unnecessarily. But in fact they were not that good. Most of the rulers of those days were certainly cruel and barbarous tyrants and it was the British who saved the people from the hands of those monsters. The people in Indian villages breathed a sigh of relief in those days when they saw white men who put down such tyrants and introducing new and modern changes. They exclaimed that those were really the 'Gandharvas' of yore, come down to the earth to protect people. According to the scholars who have now taken to rewrite Indian history, every Muslim ruler, Nawab and Saheb, were all tyrants in the medieval times. At the same time, the Hindu chiefs were also in no way better. In our own time and under a sweet name of democratic system we had 'Kairons' of varied types and degrees. Then what to say of those days of absolute power of those thousands with no education, no culture or anything of the sort.

The British never blackmailed a ruler unnecessarily. If one historian had blackmailed a ruler, ^{there} was another fair-minded writer to say something good about him. Wherever the British went wrong in their policies with these rulers, they have unsparingly recorded all such short-comings. In that way the Raja of Coorg also has got many good testimonials from the British, but that is a different matter. Those who were tolerably good and cooperative and decent in their behaviour towards their people and to the British, were able to retain their throne till 1947, and their number was nearly a thousand, including big and small native chiefs. All the rest of the tyrants were sacked and while doing so the British did inform the people what

those rulers were. It can't be called 'blackmail'. The British had already introduced the national and international laws in their operations of various policies even by the end of eighteenth century and the most cases they honoured the provisions of those codes.

If we say that those records are "blackmail", after a century or so, one could see the records of the rulers of today, and that would be more atrocious in content because today's rulers are in no way better. They kill people without actually shooting and cut them into pieces without actually cutting, and these expressions I borrowed from the ancient Kodava folk songs. Because of the world of today which produce hourly and minutely records through various ways including newspapers, the reports about these rulers are bundled up in heaps of files, the research scholars have already begun to feast with the material. Our dear ex-Prime Minister, Nehru would be the first casualty at their hands, and so also many others.

At Page 193 of the book 'Kodavas', it is said that :

" Even Robert Cole who had all praise for the Kodavas did not fail to paint the last King black."

Where was the need for this author to call this Raja-a 'King' ? Why it should be like that, I need not explain. As one coming almost suddenly to the field he wanted to show some originality by this kind of violation of conventional terms.

However, he says, that even Robert Cole praised Kodavas. I am asking him whether he saw only that man praising the Kodavas. All the English officers of the last century have left excellent reports on the Kodavas. They

began to do so from the days of Pennant and Mill and others in the end of the 18th century. Robert Cole in that way is a late comer, and too copied it down from the earlier reports.

Why did they praise Kodavas? Let me say this. Firstly the Kodavas were good warriors and they were admired even by Hyder Ali. Kodavas supported the British and that is one of the reasons for them to earn the testimony from their former masters. Thirdly, the Englishmen of those days were truly the lovers of culture. They respected and admired most of the cultural traits of the various Indian communities and they have left many records appreciating them and many have written books. They even exempted the Sikh soldiers from shaving their beard and removing their turbans. The British would have admired and respected Kodavas more if they had adhered to their national dress and customs strictly because they were not a race who liked those people who aped them. But they knew that the Indians are opportunists.

Therefore, if Robert Cole praises the Kodavas, it does not mean that he should praise their 'King'. That 'King' after all, was not a Kodava. He was also not managing the state affairs well, apart from his brother-in-law's complaint against him. That brother-in-law ~~also a man who~~ was equally bad. A 'King' with an adviser of the type of Dewan Kunta Basava would not be able to invite admiration from anyone. He need not have killed the members of the royal family if we believe what Robert Cole and others said. That cruelty was the cause for the Kodavas to turn against a ruler of the sort. Therefore, one should not mix up the Raja and his stooges with the Kodavas, when

especially the Kodava commoners were then the cream of Kodava spirit and culture.

What the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' says is this : "The charges against the king were only concoctions—that can be inferred from the fact that Kodavas stood by the king."

Firstly, on the first part of the above statement, I should say that those charges were not at all concoctions. There was truth in those charges. The British writers of the time disagreed only on the constitutional points of the annexation of Coorg. Some of them even said that the Raja could have been retained, but they were not at that time aware of the internal stories.

Then to say that the Kodavas stood by the 'King,' means one must know the number of Kodavas who stood by the 'King.' With four ministers around the Raja, the people were split into groups. Dewan Basava was the master of intrigues. Laxminaranayya gathered round him influential non-Kodavas. Bopanna had the support of the most of the Kodavas whereas Ponnappa was the man who was always sitting on the fence. The party behind Dewan Bopanna was never loyal to the Raja. The Kodavas were eager for a change in the political set up and that was a sensible move altogether and no tears need be shed on the fate of the Raja.

15. "WELFARE"—WHEN AND WHERE ?

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' says that, "Other sources reveal that Viraraja was a popular King and took keen interest in the welfare of the people."

Which are those sources? Where are those sources? It is true that there are sources, but what did they say in those 'sources?' Twenty years back I too believed those cock-and-bull stories, but in this 'Sputnik Age,' new lights are shed on these things day by day, and this Author did not try to study any of those old or new sources except the local sympathy expressed in support of the Raja from time to time. If at all Viraraja was popular, it was only among the section of a small community of non-Kodavas. Even among his personal officers there were few who considered him popular. The Raja never trusted any local men and most of his trusted lieutenants were some Muslims who ran away from Mysore after Tipu's fall and some Malayalee Christian clerks and others, and Dewan Basava was the leader of all those bandits.

When the Raja left Mercara very few people were there to shed tears for him although a few gathered along the roads to see the spectacle. As he proceeded along the Fraserpet route some non-Kodavas stopped him to submit an address appreciating his services. These things are done even today for all sorts of rulers. Among the people who accompanied him up to Mysore, then to Vellore and then to Benares, were all opportunists and most of them returned before he reached his destination. But those opportunists were able to gather money from the Raja promising the fallen chief that they would be agitating against the British rule and so on.

If there are any sources which gave this Author to state that the Raja took keen interest in the welfare of the people, that is sheer imaginary story or fairy tale. In those days the word "welfare" and "of the people and for

the people * were never in the dictionary of any Indian rulers. "Welfare of the people" are recently imported words. In the olden days there were things that meant like that but that was never put into practice. From the time of Asoka, many local chiefs had undertaken many welfare projects successfully like road building, tree planting, renovating village tanks and wells etc etc. Education and Knowledge were the monopoly of the Brahmins, and they were confined to certain monasteries and temples. As centuries rolled on most of these projects ceased to be state projects.

What were those local rulers and chiefs doing? They were trying to defend themselves from their surrounded enemies. They were busy digging trenches, collecting men for their Army, manufacturing indigenous fighting weapons and things like that. People were dying out of malnutrition, starvation, disease and there was no population problem at all. All these stories are too long to say. Anyway, to apply the words "welfare of the people" to the Raja of Coorg is a blunder, and it seems to me like that.

The last Raja was in his twenties when he became a ruler and he had his own headache to consolidate his position because of internal quarrels among the members of the royal family. His father Lingaraja is credited with the 'Hukumnaama', the series of court orders about land revenue, the main purpose of which was to collect taxes from the people in an orderly way and fill his coffers. That would not be a welfare work. It is a measure of taxation. And, the Elder Viraraja was, of course, busy fighting Tipu in his younger days, and when ^{he} actually began to rule he fell ill and for sometime he behaved badly.

But let me say that if any 'sources' are there to say about the welfare work done by these people, these are just the assumptions. Yes, there was some welfare work at that time, but those were done by the British who took the State under their protection from 1790 to 1834. The Rajas were their puppets. They could not do anything on their own during those days. Even to marry and to die, they had to ask the British, and in fact, that was what happened. Those three last rulers died under such circumstances, let alone doing other things. The British helped the Elder Viraraja infixing up his state boundaries, helped Linga Raja to get the lands surveyed by Lt. Connor, and they assisted to build some trunk roads and open postal stations during the time of the younger Viraraja. Therefore, the facts about 'welfare' projects that were undertaken by the British should not be mistakenly attributed to these Rajas who simply ruled the roost, and nothing else.

16. SOME MORE INTERESTING HOWLERS

I understand the trouble with this Author of the book, 'Kodavas'. He says that he had shown the manuscript to some persons, but those some persons were only rich and influential ones around there, who were useful to him to give him some testimonials and help him with funds. He did not show this to the right type of scholars and historians who would not have allowed him to do such simple mistakes as these. Well, I understand what's what.

Let me proceed to state some more howlers in this book 'Kodavas'. At Page 192, it is said that while the Raja was in England, "Queen Victoria gave protection to them".

This is wrong. The Queen never interfered with the political activities or ambitions of the Raja. What she did was that she showed her personal interest to Princess Gowramma. The Raja tried to exploit this also to his advantage, but the British statesmen were not those who would allow him to do it, and they were not the Congressmen who, what they say, suffered imprisonment in 1942, and then say that as a qualification for them to write books.

At Page 194 of the book, 'Kodavas', it is said that "Till 1857 the British ruler maintained the old administration" in Coorg.

This is not quite correct. The change was gradual though not abrupt. After 1857 Rebellion changes in land revenue, forest and public works departments were swift. Revenue assessment policy was changed, primary schools with English teaching were introduced and a network of roads were built to some important places. But then till 1850 the progress was slow.

At Page 194 of the book, 'Kodavas' it is said that, "in 1857 Queen Victoria declared herself as the Empress of India."

This is an unforgivable error. And then, poor "Queen Victoria declaring herself." No, Sir. 1857 was the year famous for the "Sepoy Mutiny" which took place, and in 1858, the Queen proclaimed that "Indians would be treated on an equality with the British subjects and they would be associated with the Government of the country." That's all that happened in 1857 and 1858.

Queen Victoria became Empress of India, twenty years later in 1878, and it was Benjamin Disraeli's India Bill that made her the Empress of India, and there is no question of 'declaring herself.'

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' says that "the Resident at Mysore was the Chief Commissioner of Coorg."

Since when ? Is it from 1834 ? These hurried jottings of historical facts are running mad on the paper of this attractively got up book.

In Mysore, till 1869, the British chief was called "the Commissioner for the Affairs of Mysore." Under him worked the British chief in Coorg, and he was called "Superintendent of Coorg". From February 1869, the Commissioner of Mysore was called the Resident of Mysore and the Superintendent of Coorg as Commissioner of Coorg, and Capt. Le Hardy was the first Superintendent from 1834 and L. B. Bowring was the first Commissioner of Coorg from 1869. It was only from March 1881, the Resident of Mysore became the ex-Officio Chief Commissioner of Coorg but the Commissioner of Coorg continued to be the local chief of Coorg.

At Page 194 of the book, 'Kodavas' the Author makes another careless but serious mistake when he says, "The Resident of Mysore was the Chief Commissioner of Coorg and the Commissioner looked after the affairs of the Province. This arrangement continued up to 1942."

No, this arrangement died in 1940 in the month of July. J. W. Prichard, who was the Commissioner of Coorg started working in the same place designated as the Chief Commissioner of Coorg.

The Author also says the following as though he is very fond of the year 1942, and no other 'years'. He says :

"In 1942 the connection of the Resident in Mysore was severed and a Chief Commissioner for Coorg was appointed. The Post was given to an Indian and one of the noble sons

of the soil—a Kodava, Dewan Bahadur Ketoli Chengappa.”

It is rather surprising how a newspaper editor who was there on the spot all the time could give such a deliberately distorted version of the facts within so short a time of one's memory. And then he says that all this afford a “mirror—to the life of Kodavas.” What kind of mirror is this, I ask.

Anyway as I told above that connection of the Resident of Mysore was severed not in 1942 but in 1940. Mr. Prichard who was promoted as the Chief Commissioner of Coorg from his post as Commissioner, continued in the post till 31st January 1943. He was succeeded by Mr. J. de Gordon who was the Chief Commissioner for a short time. After him, “Dewn Bahadur Ketoli Chengappa” became the Chief Commissioner, and that was on the 26th of April 1943.

In all such cases, this Author has been very obstinate or indifferent towards the thing that he was writing. He could have referred to the book which he had already had, “A Tiny Model State” with him. No one would have accused him of stealing from that because these are the simple facts of history, and the “youth of today” should not have been mis-led by this sort of narratives and howlers. Apart from these, he commits grave mistakes as he goes on stating about the affairs concerning to the recent developments, about which I would refer to in the subsequent pages.

17. THE END OF THE BRITISH RULE.

The Author of the book, ‘Kodavas’ says, that:—

“During the British rule (in Coorg) there was considerable development, especially regarding education.”

Here, the word 'considerable' and the words 'especially regarding education,' are all meaningless on account of various reasons.

In those days of the British rule, a section of our people were saying that the British rule in India was a curse. Those were mainly the politicians who were emerging from oblivion and they were saying that because they knew that that was the only way for them to come up in public life. Excepting those very few sincere people in politics all the others were then just the upstarts. In that sense, that was only a slogan used for political purposes, and that need not be based on truth. Twenty years after they had left, one must venture to speak about the British rule in India with justified pride rather than with cynicism. But that could be done only by great men like Raja Rammohan Roy, Gokhale, Ranade, and Gandhi who found in the Britishers the actual saviours of the country. For instance, I may quote that great patriot, Pheroazshah Mehta who said, that :—

"My steadfast loyalty is founded upon the rock of hope and patience. I accept the British rule as Ranade did, as dispensation so wonderful—It would be a folly not to accept it as a declaration of God's will."

These were the tributes to the British rule in those days by those great giants among the fighters for freedom of the country. Anyway, the readers here should not think that I am giving any importance to what this Author of the book, 'Kodavas' wrote, but I am taking this opportunity only to explain myself as to how I too feel about the British rule in contrast to the misrule of today.

After a thousand-year political turmoil and confusion

that took place in our country due to the Muhammeden influx and influence in India from the 8th to the 18th century, and after a thousand and odd tragic things that happened in those days with the Hindu religion, the Hindu influence and the Hindu character terribly shaken and sunk to the lowest ebb, and almost got threatened to its virtual extinct, it was the coming of the British to India and establishing an empirical power with their administration based on the modern concepts of justice, law and order, efficient civil service, public works, modern education and many things in hundreds, saved the country. If it had not happened that way, the India in the North would have been ruled today by some descendants of the Mughals, the Deccan by some one of the Nizam, and the Southern parts by someone of the family of Tipu Sultan, in addition to the ever so many Nawabs and Sahebs all over the country.

To say that during the British rule only a 'considerable development' took place, is a thing that reveals ignorance, arrogance and cynicism. If it was not for the British rule, or if there had been no such epoch-making change in the history of our country, most of the Indians would have been still in the 'Area of Darkness', and I should say, in jungles, with jungle law prevailing and with most of the people wading in the sea of superstition and with no advantage of having modern education and enlightenment. If the British had not stopped some atrocious and cruel customary practices, there would not have been left any widows to agitate against the British then, and rule over the people now. If one thinks of all that had happened, and sudden change that took place

during a short time of about 200 years, one cannot but say that it was the British who kicked up this country from the medieval age right into the modern age of development of the twentieth century.

We are also well aware of the moral, ethical, economic and political evolution that took place in the last century under the British rule with the introduction of hundreds of social, economic and educational reforms. The great Indian scholars, scientists and reformers beginning from Raja Rammohan Roy to Mahatma Gandhi, were all the legacy of the British system and their system of education, and everyone of them was grateful for all what the British did, and, in fact, that was a period of emergence of the ~~new era~~ with silent revolution and evolution that brought stability, peace and prestige to the country. One must remember that it was the British who created an United India in 1858 with the Secretary of State for India ruling the whole of India—then undivided India, from England. Those were the days of intellectual evolution with modern system of education, scientific and industrial progress, network of railways and roads, modern housing system and various other reforms and development. The warring factions of the Hindus and the Muslims were relegated to the background and people breathed free air after a long period of political instability, uncertainty, tyranny, superstition and ignorance. Then, the whole country appeared anew and that was only about one-hundred years back. What a short time to transform a country of a long history and a glorious heritage.

The days when people indulged in decrying the British rule, were just the days of the struggle for freedom. Most

of the things that were said of them then were just opportunistic, ill-conceived and irresponsible utterances. Anyway those days have now passed on to history, and, what is now required is a very careful and unbiased and the most objective evaluation of the great change that took place during the British times.

I was one who was personally not at all happy to see the British quit the country. There was no need for them to relinquish their power at that time when their service was still required to mould the moral and ethical outlook of the Indian people and the society. As they had abolished 'Sati' and hundreds of such cruel customs and superstitious rituals in the past, they had also many more things to do here.

However, freedom came, rather very soon, and on the 15th August 1947, the independence day was celebrated all over the country with great joy, but, for me, it seemed to be a day of mourning. On that day I was not in the town to rejoice over that much talked of freedom. I escaped from attending Government function in which I had to take part and then roamed about in my village wetlands thinking something which I cannot express what it was about. My immature evaluation of those days had already proved correct, however, within twenty years. Mahatma Gandhi left the country six months after that, and Mr. Jinnah, a little later. The British should have stayed at least for another twenty-five years to cleanse the dirt, and by dealing firmly with the power-crazy politicians.

Anyway, we lost those days as well as the vast undivided country mapped in pink colour, called British India and, what I see today is a tattered country with no safe

borders, no reliable friends, no secure neighbours, no dependable countries in the Northern Asia, with the Communists of Russia and China, and no foreign countries that look at us as respectable human beings. Thus, the glorious Bharat that is India, which was once hailed as Karma Bhoomi, is now again bristling with internal strife and external dangers. All that defence that the British built, all that high standard of Education the British imparted, all that incorruptible civil service the British established, the culture and heritage of the country they explored, the literary and the archaeological wealth they unearthed and preserved, and the efficient system in many other fields they fostered, are—fast waning. The youth of today just stepping into their twenties cannot know all this, and for them all these are a part of the past history.

Very often it is said that a good government is no substitute for self-government. But who wants, I ask, a self-government of the corrupt, dishonest, nepotistic, obstinate, deceitful people of little education, character and principle? Who wants a self-government of self-seekers, moral wrecks and of those who encourage totalitarian outlook and thus cause moral turmoil and political disorder? When I say this, let me make it clear that I am fully aware of what I am saying. I want freedom, but only that freedom which holds the country's moral, ethical and economic order high by those people with a selfless spirit of dedication and service in the interest of the Motherland. And, that is what I miss today !

18. "ON THE ROAD OF PHENOMENAL PROGRESS"

In the process of his telling some good things that happened after the country attained independence, the Author of the Book, 'Kodavas' says at Page 201 of his book, that Coorg, "was on the road of phenomenal progress" at the time of its merger to the state of Karnataka on the 1st November 1956

I am certainly at a loss to understand this writer or any other writer who ventures on giving such 'fairy-tale' reports. One can state at length all that was done during those days—both good and bad, but to say things in this fashion is certainly a thing not only inaccurate but also misleading.

At Page 195 of the book, 'Kodavas', something is said about the "five-year administration of the popular Government" of Coorg.

Why not the author who claims doing "deep research", be clear about these things? Was it a five-year administration, if one should be correct while recording the recent events? The Home Minister, Government of India, inaugurated the new legislative assembly of then Part C State of Coorg, on the 26th March 1952. The two-man ministry started functioning about four or five days prior to that. Therefore, one could say that the 'popular government' functioned exactly for a period of four years, seven months and ten days, till the 31st October 1956, and from the 1st of November that year, Coorg became a district of the State of Karnataka.

Well, what I cannot understand here is about the

'phenomenal progress' that was made during those four years, seven months and ten days, and he writes it under the head, 'Coorg in 1956'. A casual observer of all those things happened in those days, would at once find all that is said in the book, 'Kodavas', as just the howlers of a writer who failed to take care while reporting and recording the contemporary history.

Reviewing this book, a North Indian newspaper said that :

"In the concluding pages the author (of 'Kodavas') has given some background information about Coorg, which will be found useful by the general reader..... All students of Indian sociology and anthropology will find this book of special interest."

Yes, this is a fact, but this is also a mistake if one reviews a book on a subject about which he does not know anything. How are the outsiders to know that most of it, or almost all of what is said in the book is wrong? If any one appreciates the book, he is doing it because he finds the customs of Coorg or of the Kodavas collected, compiled, translated from other books with coloured illustrations. Apart from that how are they to know whether what is written is correct or not? However, on this assertion of the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' about the 'phenomenal progress' in Coorg in 1956, I would like to touch on a few points.

The Author says that during the regime of the 'popular government' in 1956, there were 80 primary schools, 50 middle schools, 15 high schools and one college in Coorg. Note the figures like 80, 50 and 15,—all these

are round figures, and one cannot say how much of it is reliable. But I may tell him that in 1952 when the 'popular government' assumed power, there were 69 primary schools, 47 middle schools, eleven high schools and one college.

Therefore, in the field of education, the 'phenomenal progress' was an increase of eleven primary schools, three middle schools and four high schools, and, these high schools were then the private institutions and the Government had nothing to do with them. So, that is the 'phenomenal progress' in Education on which they showed an account of an enormous spending to the tune of Rs. 25 lakhs a year.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' is fond of telling about the 'road to the phenomenal progress' in the cooperative department. In 1956, he says, that there were 441 cooperative societies of all kinds, although the figure '441' should be verified, and it should be verified not on the basis of records but by counting the actual number of cooperative societies, which are said to have been then existed. Anyway, I say that in 1952 there were already 410 cooperative societies, and an increase of 31 societies during those four and a half years, if those figures are correct, could not be said as 'phenomenal'.

Over and above all that the people of those days were well aware of the fact that during those four years and seven months and ten days, there were cases of loot, plunder and in some cases wholesale liquidation of cooperative societies or cooperative banks and the number of such cases is 'considerable'. There are records to speak to the effect that such 'phenomenal' plunder of cooperative

societies did not occur in the past and to that extent. I can even say some of the misappropriation cases of those days are still left undecided and unattended to just like the twenty-year old Kashmir problem.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' also gives some other figures which however fails to convince me of the 'phenomenal progress' of Coorg in 1956. He says that in 1956, the area of the paddy cultivation was 90,000 acres. I must say that in 1952 the area of the paddy cultivation was also the same—that 90,000 acres. There need not be any effort to bluff on all these things. The quantity of paddy exported in 1956 was, he says, 20,000 tons, and in 1952 the quantity exported was 22,000 tons, means a backward progress by 2,000 tons. That was because more people from outside came into Coorg to consume paddy which would otherwise have been exported. The same little difference shows in the figures shown as area of cultivation of coffee, orange etc in 1956 and in 1952. I could not get the point of the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' when he says that Coorg was in the "road of phenomenal progress" in 1956.

But I can say one thing. In all the departments of the then Government of Coorg, there has been a 'phenomenal' increase in the number of employees. All offices were filled with clerical staff and officials making it very difficult to find accommodation to sit in a decorous and dignified manner befitting to their new position as those working for the 'popular government'. Many people were running about in many jeeps, and one must certainly say that all these paraphernalia consisting of so many people should contribute something to make a show of 'phenomenal

progress'.

Writing about the Medical Department, the Author says that there has been an increase in medical facilities and malaria was completely eradicated in "Coorg in 1956".

I am afraid, this Author of the book, 'Kodavas' is misleading the people by these statements. As a politician he thinks that the annual budget figures are all that is needed to sing the song of 'progress'. About Rs. 14 lakhs is shown against this head—'public health' in 1956, and by that time they had chalked out a five-year plan also and called it the second Plan. But I could not see any medical facilities given to what was already there excepting some buildings erected here and there, and even those hospital and school buildings raised during that time were as a result of the generosity of some rich people and those can be seen even today with the names in the stone slabs of those builders together with the names of the ministers and the then chief commissioner. If one says that more medicine bottles and glasswares and test tubes and things like that were purchased during that time, I should say that it was a matter of routine thing to do. To speak of more medical facilities one should see how many more beds were purchased and how many more doctors and nurses were appointed during this time. On the whole, the picture painted does not seem to be so colourful or impressive.

To say that malaria in Coorg was eradicated during the regime of the 'popular government' is another guess-work. This malaria department came into being in 1945 under the post-war development programme, and they sprayed D.D.T. all over Coorg and at all nooks and corners

of every house, every street and every lane. In about two years it seemed that all the mosquitoes died and there was no malaria at all. The first two or three rounds of spraying was so effective that Coorg was relieved of malaria and that left the malaria department without any work after that. But it continued, and in 1949, there was a talk of winding it up but in order to accommodate the personnel of the department with a reduced number of men, it was maintained. That was mainly because of the fact that Government of India paid some subsidy annually towards the post-war development work in Coorg.

Therefore, when the 'popular government' started functioning in March 1952, they continued some of these unnecessary departments, sometimes even extending the services of the superannuated officers. As a result of this and many other kinds of extravagancies displayed to give a good impression to the writer of the book, 'Kodavas', the 'popular government' increased the number of gazetted posts in Coorg from 15 in 1952 to 45 in 1956. That is a 'phenomenal progress', no doubt. In fact, what I could find from several records that are before me, is that the 'popular government' that started working in 1952, made things just as much as to become itself an unpopular government by 1956. On all these things, I may have to state at length on some other occasion, and this would not be the place to go into details.

19. THE ILLUSION OF 'ECONOMIC STABILITY'

It was C. Rajagopalachari who said that "it is much easier to deceive the ignorant electorate with slogans of

untruth than to educate them in economic truths."

That is certainly correct. Not only the common and ignorant people but the so called educated ones also are carried away by such slogans, and in matters of economy, it is much easier for the politicians to deceive the people than in other subjects.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' under the caption "Economic Stability" during the time of the 'popular government' in Coorg from 1952 to 1956, says that "economic position was sound."

The economy of Coorg was always sound especially after the agricultural income tax was introduced about four years before the 'popular government' came into being. After that it was much more sound when the forests were begun to be ravaged, and later it was a high sounding economy when the 'popular government' got money from time to time from the Central Government under the pretext of working various schemes.

With all this what does the balance sheet of 1956 say? Income in 1952 was Rs 104 lakhs, and in 1956, it was Rs. 157 laks, and it is a difference of Rs. 52 lakhs after so much agricultural income tax, land revenue, central subsidy, forest exploitation, and many other things. The increase in budget figures on expenditure was inevitable because of the new set up and of the trends of the time, and not because they did anything extraordinary. In 1956, they showed as expenditure on Education Rs. 26 lakhs, on Medical department Rs. 14 lakhs and on Civil works Rs. 24 lakhs. The surplus money left in 1956 was Rs. 53 lakhs only while in 1952 the amount was much more than that. The revenue was increasing fast during the years 1952 and

1956 due to various kinds of collections, and the figures of 1954 showed the revenue as Rs. 103.85 lakhs, of the year 1955 as 117.43 lakhs and of 1956 as Rs. 230.65 lakhs.

Therefore, there was plenty of money, and as a result, 'the economy was sound', but after that what happened and how it was spent, is the thing that one should see. I should here say with all the force at my command, that, the money was squandered like anything. The five-year plans drawn on a big scale, the Barapole project initiated, and many other high-sounding schemes talked about, were all mostly on paper, and to prepare those plans and for paying hundreds and hundreds of employees in the name of prestige schemes, a lot of money was wasted. About forty percent of the money must have gone on some useful projects like roads, village development works, tribal welfare schemes, and things like that, and the rest of the money was spent on various unnecessary things and on selfish pursuits in the name of the Government. Nehru wanted to show India with big plans involving huge amount, similarly the "Chota Nehru" in states too prepared such plans. If I should give details of all that here, it would be a very lengthy thesis altogether, and therefore, I would reserve it for some other occasion.

The Union Home Minister had cautioned the Governments of the Part C States at that time stating that :

"The danger lay, however, in the small states trying to emulate bigger states in their ministerial administration. The danger is that the part C States may become top-heavy and I have noticed that tendency."

In fact, that was how the 'sound economy' was misused in Coorg. That extravagancy did not benefit the common man at all although the party in power had a field day with all that money they had. The people they gathered around them, the publicity they initiated, the frequent trips they undertook to North India, the property they purchased, the glamour of power and arrogance of behaviour they betrayed, hundreds of complaints against them through newspapers, that appeared, and many other things were all then a day to day affair, and for all this, the 'sound economy' that was in their possession was the reason.

This myth of 'sound economy' was exploded by the States Reorganisation Commission, in their report of 1955, thus :

"The democratic experiment in these (Part C) States, wherever it has been tried, has proved to be more costly than was expected or intended, and this extra cost has not been justified by increased administrative efficiency or rapid economic and social progress."

That was the state of affairs then. After showing the people some polished and glittering works here and there, they used the money, as the S.R.C. said, not for the "administrative efficiency or rapid economic and social progress". Two or three bridges, some culverts, asphaltting or tarring of some roads that were already there, and building some colonies for tribal people, were the main things undertaken by them, but underneath all these, how much money flowed through which direction, is a thing

that we shall not discuss here as it would be a long story to say with the help of the records left by the 'popular government' itself.

Anyway the economy was sound, but the public money in charge of unscrupulous people who misuse it instead of use it, to the betterment of the people as a whole, cannot be called 'sound economy'. There is no use of our being enamoured by those publicity stunts, those budget figures, the huge paraphernalia they built around them etc. to show the 'soundness of economy', when in fact, all that is a way to deceive people who are ignorant and who have "no academic qualification as such", rather than "to educate them in economic truths". What the States Reorganisation Commission said on the soundness of the financial position that was then talked of from various platforms was this :

"The claim that these States (Part C States) are financially in no worse position than the other States, that they will be able to cover their ordinary non-development expenditure if they are treated like the other states and that they can continue to exist as independent entities without being an undue burden on the Centre cannot be accepted."

Well, the above observation was made in a larger and broader aspect, but as far as Coorg was concerned the resources available was substantial, and the S.R.C. too had acknowledged the fact, but they never said anywhere that Coorg could continue its democratic form of Government. They recommended its merger when the people in charge of the 'sound economy' showed themselves as spend-thrifts

and not utilising the funds for the benefit of the people as a whole. A system working like that would not be 'sound economy' at all, that cannot be called even just as 'economy', it could be only a way to defraud the public that consist of thousands of poor, ill-fed and ill-informed people.

20. SOME MORE ABSURD STATEMENTS

I am not very happy to shower unhappy comments on a book so attractively got up like the one, 'Kodavas.' But having written a book of the sort out of spite, the Author of the book and the admirers of the book, have to be prepared to take back what they ought to expect. I have told times without number that the Author was not the man to write either on culture or on the subjects that he attempted to write. It is said in that book as below :

"Because of the close connection between the ruled and the rulers, and the smallness of the area, the voice of the common man was heard—"

He is talking through his head. That is not true. The 'popular Government' was there with the votes of the majority of the people who were the non-Kodavas and the estate labourers, most of whom were those came from outside. All these people carried on their own work whatever and whoever the 'government', because they earned their bread by the sweat of their toil. The people with actual problem were those sons of the soil, the Kodavas, and they were in a minority although most of the leading persons among them defected and walked over

to the side of the ruling party. Still many were left unattended to and they included not only the Kodavas but others also. "The close connection" between the people of the Government party and the Government, was always there, and it is a fact that their voice was heard, but not of others. Let us be clear about it. The rest of the people were hunted after or shadowed by the people of the intelligence department, and that has been a daily occurrence.

Further more, the Author of the book 'Kodavas' says that "immediate remedial measures were taken promptly." He does not think what after all he is writing. He must remember that the newspaper that he was writing, the 'oldest Weekly of Coorg', read by a large number of people in Coorg, was itself condemned by the ruling party, and in the reports sent to the Central Govt., by the 'popular government', the existence of such a paper was not at all recognised by them. To whom did they take 'remedial measures' and 'promptly?' Of course, to a few of their party caucus they had to extend their generosity at the cost of the state revenue, and that they did, and therefore, they were in the seats of power. The way how the 'popular government distributed public funds that was allotted to be given as flood damages, long-term loans, 'takkavi' loans etc, speak of the sincerity of their 'remedial measures' taken. That kind of partiality was also evident in their distribution of 'paisari' lands, cooperative loans and so many other privileges extended. All that was done on party considerations. and everyone was aware of that. In all this, we must put things straight and not beat about the bush. The Author of the book,

'Kodavas' says that :—

“ As a result of the bad off shoots of the election and the party outlooks, the suppression of the political opponents was resorted to.”

That's right, and that was what actually happened. Further he says :

“ It cast a black shadow of doubt and distrust in the minds of many a citizen about the party system of Government.”

Yes, this is right. That was exactly the situation that existed then. Many people have said that. The members of the opposite party in the Coorg legislature also have told that many a time. But, what the States Reorganization Commission said about that is more clear. They said :

“ Personal touch in small states degenerate into personal rule with all that it implies.”

They also said :—

“ The smaller the forum for political activity the greater the inter-play of personal ambitions and jealousies.”

The Author of the book 'Kodavas' wants to say something like, “ And yet comparatively—” He wants to compare that administration of Coorg of 1952 to 1956, to that of the other States of India. No, that's not correct. All over India, either big states or small states, the story was the same. Everywhere the ruling parties worked on the basis of establishing their party positions and thus “ cast black shadow of doubt and distrust”, and in that Coorg was in no way better. There need not be any effort to

say, "And yet comparatively", as though any of us had personally studied the situation then existed in other states. In regard to the smaller States, the States Reorganization Commission saw this "black shadow" more clearly, and the leaders of these small States even had started a game to hoodwink that High Power Commission too, and thus perpetuate their power as the ancient Nawabs, and the S.R.C., scotched it nicely, when they said thus:

"Some amount of community of interests had developed in political circles in these (Part C.) States, particularly since the appointment of S.R.C."

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' hurls another complementary tribute, over and above the observations of that High Power Commission, by saying, "Administration as such was efficient." This is the concluding part of his sentence beginning with, "And yet comparatively—".

The 'popular government' of Coorg of 1952 to 1956, was a black chapter of the history of Coorg. It does not deserve any complements. It was a mock democracy, and efficiency was nowhere near that. It worked in an abhorrent manner and that reminded the causes for the fall of the ancient city states.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' also says of 'progress.' What he says is that the "administration as such was efficient and progressive."

I am afraid, I have to repeat that this Author uses all those English words that a forlorn lover would use to woo a fallen woman. There was no progress of any sort except that some people became rich and those people were their

partymen, and even among them a few alone were able to influence them and thus 'make hay while sun shines. Morally and ethically, Coorg was taken back to the nineteenth century, and there was nothing left. The States Reorganization Commission put it more lucidly than any one else about this 'efficiency and progress.' They said that :

" Efficient state services cannot be created in each of these (Part C) States—The existing position is all the more unsatisfactory and cannot be continued indefinitely."

These are the views of the All India High Power Commission, and why ~~should~~ any of us should dabble on the issue with words like 'efficiency', 'progressive' and so on? If there was at least one-tenth of what the Author says, then the S.R.C. would have recommended Coorg's separation, but then, that was not to be.

Those in the Government, have shown to the people work worth Rs. 50 for every Rs. 100 they got through various means. Where did the other Rs. 50 go? Metalling a few roads, tarring of the most of the roads, building half a dozen clustered hutments, constructing some bridges and some other show-pieces, does not mean any achievement till we know where the other Rs. 50 of every Rs. 100 go, and how it was spent, and where it was spent. Till one knows that, this talk of 'efficiency and progress' would be like deceiving the 'youth of today' as well as of tomorrow and also the people outside Coorg.

This Author of the book, 'Kodavas' says that
 " Coorg saw many improvements."

Yes, the above said things were all the improvements, but at what cost? Where did all that crores and lakhs that was shown in the budget sheets go and how was it spent and on what? Many of the public buildings, as I already said, were contributed by rich men in order to stop being victimised by the popular members of the 'popular government' who needlessly teased them in many ways, and thus got the buildings erected and then got inscribed their names on the stones. All this is a part of a big game called politics, self-government, party government and so on. If these things are all 'improvements' to a local writer who is narrating the past or the contemporary events, one can only say that he is blind to realities, and, is incapable of writing anything honestly or objectively.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' also saw improvements both on "administrative and economic fronts" and also "on every sphere of activity conceivable".

All this looks like a propaganda that he has undertaken to do for someone, for some 'generous souls' there, from whom he could expect another trayful of generosity. I must say this because, as I told in the beginning, he is writing all this to make a 'literary career' under the influence of such 'souls'. He says that:—

"In administrative and economic fronts and in every sphere of activity "conceivable", there was, "progress and efficiency".

Well, such exaggerated and repulsively painted things look like an old courtier or the court writer who said that Hyder Ali was equal to Ramachandra, gallant, pious and so on. This Author of the book, 'Kodavas' and many such writers

afford some humour to otherwise a dull society by this kind of writings.

But what did the States Reorganization Commission say on these States which had progress "in every sphere of activity conceivable?" They said that :

"Public opinion all over the country seems to favour the merger of these (Part C.) States".

Why should it be so? Did they not interview the Author of the book, 'Kodavas', and obtain his expert opinion? Perhaps, they forgot. On the other hand, the S.R.C. said emphatically in their report as follows :—

"The part C. States, in most cases, are unplanned enclaves . . . This democratic experiments in those states has proved more costly than was expected."

This High Power Commission Report apart, the people of Coorg who were till then the staunch separationists themselves found it impossible to put up with that sickening atmosphere caused on account of the repressive policy of this Author's 'popular government' and, therefore, they both individually and as a body, submitted petitions to the Commission requesting them to put an end to this kind of Government and wipe it out altogether from the scene. One of the petitions was as follows :—

"This two years of democratic administration had shown that Coorg was too small a state to conduct itself in a manner befitting to its given status. Every one is known to every other man, and, therefore, instead of duties and principles, the administration rests only on likes and dislikes. Political differences have sunk too low into personal bickerings, and this

evil has spread all over from the towns to villages and from villages to families resulting in mutual distrust, disunity and disorder in the State and among the people themselves. Communal feelings and rancour have also grown beyond bounds and this bitterness has had the effect on school children too, and, it is feared, whether the youth of today, who are the future generation could lead at all a peaceful and normal life of mutual trust and tolerance among themselves. The search made for the real and imaginary enemies both by the recognised and the unrecognised agents of the Government, force us to think if this self-rule in small units was worthy and workable at all. People have completely lost their individuality and the spirit of independent thinking, which they had once enjoyed, and, there is obstruction from all sides for free thinking. It is also found dangerous to create a healthy public opinion, and, above all, it is no doubt an empty dream if anyone imagines that he could make Coorg an ideal state under these circumstances."

These kinds of writings were many in those days. Only the members of the 'popular Government' and those who defected to their side, submitted petitions eulogising Coorg's past history, natural scenery, latent wealth, 'sound economy' and so many such things, but the S. R. C. and everyone else knew their motives too, at the same time. The men of criminal intelligence department carried atrocious stories to their masters, and, sometimes against the members of their own party. When this question was discussed in the legislative assembly, the Government slyly and hypocritically informed the members that there were

only three policemen, four head-constables and one Inspector in the Intelligent force of Coorg. This was how they prepared the State budget also to show to the people like the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' to say that there was "efficiency and progress..... in every sphere of activity conceivable".

Anyway that 'efficiency and progress' was damned alright, and, now listen to what the philosopher in Dr. Radhakrishna had to say to this kind of democracy or what can be called the mock-democracy that was enacted in those days in Nehru's time. He said as follows:—

"In the name of democracy some mysterious ^{causes} ~~causes~~ in the background rules the State.... The votes of the members are not influenced by their innermost convictions.....The discussion is unreal, the debate is unnecessary and the democracy is only a name.

"Democracy in its actual working rarely permits a country to be governed by its able men.

"Democracy has become confused with ignorance, lack of discipline, and low tastes.

"There is a tendency in all democracies to standardise thought and belief. Our minds work mechanically. The mechanising mind is deadly to all creative enterprise."

Yes, this was what democracy in Coorg, that worked from 1952 to 1956, and that was, no doubt, an ideal type of mock democracy, where people's ignorance, brutal vices and hypocritical attitudes, all played a prominent part. They became meek, mild, submissive, sneaky, and ruthlessly selfish and politically immoral. They forgot God and

Religion. They carried on the days in the terms of their animal existence and nothing else.

21. FANTASTIC NONSENSE IN ALMOST EVERY LINE.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' in his zeal to colour his narration just in the way he gave some coloured pictures in the book, says under the caption, 'Coorg in 1956', that the people who were running his 'popular government' had "good intentions".

I should say that—hell be to that 'good intentions' if that was the quality of one's evaluation of 'intentions' of the politicians who were only backed up by illiterate and ignorant voters and form the Government. Those rulers would themselves chuckle at this kind of complements paid to them by their courtiers. I should say that these kinds of writings are just the purveying pornography for profit.

The members of the Coorg legislative assembly were probably correct when they said many times in the very first year of their sittings, stating that there was a sense of insecurity all over. According to the Government the number of criminal intelligence men, was only eight or nine but they like Sri Krishna of yore, showed themselves in thousands and thousands and in identical forms and shadowed people all over Coorg simultaneously at all towns, villages, village temples, village meetings, barbers' saloons, coffee hotels, public offices, private houses, buses, lorries, shops, streets and lanes and everywhere. One of the members of the Assembly said that :

* The whole atomosphere is vitiated and it has

exceeded the limits and such a situation never existed even during the days of the barbarous tyrants who ruled the country in the past."

This was the situation that existed then, and everyone knew that, everyone saw that, and every one was let down with insecurity. A Government with 'good intentions' would not do this, and indeed, they can't show 'good intentions' because their intentions are always about their own security, prosperity, their party solidarity and such things. When I say this, I am not saying anything new because as I already said that the four years from 1952 to 1956, was a black chapter in the history of Coorg, 'the Scotland of India', 'the Garden of Eden', 'the Kashmir of the South', 'home of leading generals', 'that enchanting land', 'that tiny model state', 'the land of beauty' and what not?

Many impartial reports on the working of these small states reveal that there have been a lot of hoodwinking business. As far as the politics in Coorg was concerned, their game did take a notorious turn. Once they pleaded for merger, rather fervently, then they told the people on the eve of elections in 1952 that they were not for the merger for the moment, and later after establishing themselves in their seats of power, they said that they were for the separation of Coorg and while saying this they took under their wings the leading members of the separationist party also but kept them at an arm's length. The States Reorganization Commission went through this peculiar politics and political summersaults that were taking place, and they did go through that with great interest and hurled boulders on their heads by recommending the merger of Coorg with Karnataka. When all over India people were

agitating for their provincial territorial rights, the politicians in Coorg let the people down and then gathered themselves at the State Assembly Hall to formally agree to the merger of Coorg as stated by the S.R.C.

But before doing that they conducted some meetings in village sides to take the approval of the people when all those who asked for approval and those approved, were themselves. The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' should here say what he said earlier about what happened in 1834 stating "Col. Fraser enacted a drama of make-believe at Mercara of ascertaining the wishes of the people at a meeting to which only their henchmen were invited."

It is better he reads my comments on this. Col. Fraser was invited with folded hands at the entrance to Coorg by the representatives of the people and with the Raja's approval. Later, in Mercara he called all the taluk and Nad headmen for a meeting and took their approval and that was an unanimous approval. They were not their henchmen. Those who did not agree with them, those few supporters of the Raja were also there, and they rose up against the British after two years with the help of outsiders. But what the British did at that time was perfectly constitutional, both as victors in war and as diplomats later.

But what happened 122 years after that in 1956 was something astounding. The British did not carry Coorg away with them but left them to the people after educating them and developing the land in many ways. But what did the people do? Only in eight years after they left, in 1956, the people's representatives gathered in the modern assembly hall to pass a resolution supporting the issue of merger of Coorg. A large number of people, on sentimental

grounds, agitated against the step taken by the leaders of the people and they marched to the Fort on that day, only to be held back by a strong police contingent. None of the so-called leaders met them excepting the then chief commissioner, an outsider, who had nothing to do with this. The leaders met inside the heavily guarded assembly hall, talked nonsense, abused each other, agreed to the merger of Coorg and dispersed, with a couple of them taking a neutral stand on the issue. Finally, they shamelessly declared stating that,

“There was a sense of satisfaction in Coorg over the steps taken for the merger of the State.”

What kind of ‘satisfaction’ is this? Who failed here? What caused the failure? Who are responsible for this? To say ‘people’ for everything they do, is a totalitarian creed and that term ‘people’ is imported these days by the Northern Asian pink and red countries. There they think ‘people’ as a lump of clay, and that kind of saying ‘people’ for all atrocious things the ‘people’ do, is a twentieth century phenomena.

This was all the story that happened in 1956 much in contrast to what happened in 1834. When the States Reorganization Commission Report was out in 1955, the people of Coorg heaved a sigh of relief because they were glad that they would be free from the hands of crude and irresponsible type of responsible government that existed then. That government was dangling its Rs. two-crore paper plan before the people promising them to bring heaven to earth and particularly to Coorg although there was not even a ray of hope for economic progress. A handful of partymen prospered in the name of Congress.

During this period of four years from 1952 to 1956, population of Coorg also increased with the influx of immigrants who were encouraged to buy lands and settle because they were the people on whose votes the leaders could rest and perpetuate their power and influence. All such things happened.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' just like all other court writers who get financed or patronised by the 'generous souls', speaks of 'efficient execution' of schemes.

This is again a myth. I can understand that if anyone says this in connection with the building of the 'Vidhana Soudha' in Bangalore. That is an 'efficient execution' of a big project, a truly massive structure, in a record time and without much wastage of resources. In the whole of India there could be only a very few such successful and 'efficient executions' to boast of. However, in Coorg, during that time what I saw was that most of the people close to the government were busy building their own 'Soudhas', rather efficiently, and who were those people and what were they and all that, the 'people' knew too.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas', seems to be proud when he says that "the whole set up had impressed the Central Government".

This I say as fantastic nonsense, and in no other words a statement like that could be described.

Here I ask what impressed whom? The Central Government ministers and officers who were not having in any way a better record than these ministers in the South, used to undertake their southern tour. They visited Coorg also. They came here, they were received well here in a 'Maharaja' style. They were smiling alright when

they were so received. They were fed well here. After they had their much needed rest they were taken round. The host politicians made the stay of their guest politicians very comfortable as long as they were in this 'Scotland of India'. In return, the guests, some among them like the Finance Minister, Government of India, Industries Minister, Government of India, Agriculture Minister, Government of India, and ever so many kinds of ministers would pay their hosts some tributes, and each of those tributes would be worth lakhs of rupees because such tributes too would feed the people, and not only food. One Union Minister said during his visit to Coorg that :

" I am much surprised by the close and intimate contact existing between the people and the government and the real understanding and genuine cooperation prevailing among the people and the administration which I have noticed ".

Yes, he noticed the hot and well-spiced curry that he munched here for a day or two and then talked through his head. He noticed nothing excepting his own shadow and the shadows of those fellows who escorted him from place to place bluffing that they did this miracle, and that they did that miracle. Most of what they showed him was the hundred-year old rich and luxurious coffee plantations, twenty-five year old colorful orange gardens and, of course, those enchanting and spectacular Coorg sceneries. To a Union Minister who visited Coorg only after a week the 'popular government' took charge, they showed an old tribal colony stating that that was their achievement.

Anyway, the Ministers 'noticed'. What did they

notice? It goes like a fairy tale, and the list is long. They noticed 'intimate contact', 'real understanding', 'genuine cooperation' and so on. Many others noticed, 'excellent projects', 'successful schemes', 'tremendous progress' and such other things.

After noticing all that they relaxed and slept to the cool Coorg breeze which was not found in the tropical North which would be very hot, when generally ministers wish to travel to 'notice' the 'tremendous progress' made elsewhere. After 'noticing' all that with much 'surprise' they would not keep quiet. They would sanction a good sum of money as subsidy to their hosts to carry on their 'genuine cooperation', 'administration' etc.

Apart from what I said and quoted from the findings of the S.R.C. who found in all this a sort of hoax played on the people, let me quote a member of the Coorg Legislative Assembly who said on that occasion as follows :

"Never did we experience such trouble from the agents of the Government and the people of the criminal intelligence department, at any time in the past. We have been listening to a glowing tale of all-round improvement from the opposite side. But it looks to me that all is not well in the state of Denmark. There are a lot of bickerings and misuse of funds in the schemes like, community projects, distribution of 'takkavi' loans, timber transport rules, grant of 'paisari' lands and unfair treatment to the officers.....".

All this is a long story of 'genuine cooperation' the people and the government had in those days, the reports of which were published widely and the press-boys always

waiting to pick up those things what the Government said and after waiting at the doors of those people. What the people felt about the situation would not at all be heard by the pressmen also.

Finally I should ask the writer of the book, 'Kodavas', if he was really off his head when he wrote in his book, under the heading 'Coorg in 1956', stating that, "even a shrewd administrator like Sardar Patel had to say something about it."

About what? Was it about the goats and ducks of Coorg? What did that Sardar Patel say? Where was Sardar Patel during 1952 and 1956? Was he in heaven or hell?

This Author of the book, 'Kodavas' brought in Nehru's name twice in his book to give him a testimony or a certificate on Coorg's natural sceneries and about the beauty of women as though no one had eyes to see all that for themselves. Here he brings the name of poor Sardar Patel who was not at all in the world to say that "he too had something to say" about Coorg administration. In a Kannada book written by him, and under the caption, 'Coorg in 1956' this same Author wrote that Sardar Patel called Coorg 'Ramarajya.'

I don't want to brand my 'friend' as a ghost writer or a blackmailer; I would call him as one who knows something like black magic.

The 'popular government' is Coorg took its birth in March 1952 and it died as an unpopular government on the 31st October 1956. During these four years, seven months and ten days, that 'popular government' collected hundreds of testimonials from their guests of upper India,

but all those testimonials were washed away by the river Kaveri which flows towards Mysore and thus cleared all the dirt that was heaped up here.

Why drag in Sardar Patel's name who died long back in 1950, and who called Coorg a 'Ramarajya' a couple of years before that. He found Coorg a 'Ramarajya' when it was ruled by the Chief Commissioners and under the British system. Those times of the British Government with a Chief Commissioner as head of the Government was certainly a glorious one, and that was seen by this Author of the book, 'Kodavas', as only of 'considerable development' whereas Sardar Patel and many other 'Patels' saw it in a different angle. But it is on that foundation that the British had built, our politicians now tried to put up a structure.

22. YES, "VICIOUS.... BLACK SHADOW."

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' is nowhere consistent in his views. He thinks that his contradictory statements are instances to his sense of proportion or for an objective assessment of things. Earlier he said that during those years between 1952 and 1956, there was "suppression of the political opponents" and he did not say the number of those 'political opponents'. In fact, it was the suppression of an entire community of thinkers who sincerely wished the things to go on well. But those people were disappointed by the performance of the 'party government' in a small place and later they thought that earlier the type of government was kicked out, the better it would be for the people as a whole.

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' also said that the working of the 'popular Government', "cast black shadow of doubt and distrust in the minds of many a citizen about the party system of Government."

Yes, this is right. No one complained against the party system as such but against the way the leaders of the party behaved. In fact, everyone contributed their moral and material support to the party system but soon they realised that wrong persons were in charge of the Government.

This was the case all over India, and not only in Coorg. But in a very small place like Coorg what happened was, as the S. R. C. put it, "personal touch in small states degenerate into personal rule with all that it implies."

The Author of the book, 'Kodavas' uses some high-sounding words and phrases to paint attractively the body of his 'popular government' just as he had painted his book. He says that the Government of 1952 to 1956, was a 'success', and then says of 'considerable economy' and then tells us that those people had 'fore-thought' and their performance 'efficient' and the whole thing 'progressive' and so on.

In his Kannada book published in 1962 or so, he gives much more bombastic as well as exaggerated statements on the performance of that 'popular government'. In that he said that there prevailed 'honesty' and 'no corruption' at all. He says that the civil service from the top to bottom was 'honest' and again as 'not corrupt', and the administration was 'efficient' and there was 'no starvation'. He writes that people were all 'happy' and 'contented'; No one had anything to complain of and complete 'satisfaction' and 'progress' in 'all spheres of activity', prevailed. The

people 'behaved well' and 'Sadachaar' was the hall-mark of their existence.

All this together sounds as fantastic nonsense. This man is deceiving the whole generation of men and women and the youth by this kind of writings. Nowhere the States Reorganization Commission said that Coorg was well-administered. Those who said so were the ruling party people, their supporters, and their stooges, and also their guests from the Government of India. The press correspondents who picked up all those words, gave them further lease of life. The pressmen are generally the 'parrots' who repeat what the ministers say, and the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' who is also a pressman, has done the same thing, and faithfully too.

This Author of the book, 'Kodavas' says that the people of Coorg during 1952 and 1956 were of a 'high moral calibre'. They were, perhaps, specially brought in a lorry load straight from heaven during those years—all filled up with 'high moral calibre'. This court writer also says that those people had 'sense of civic responsibilities' and they were 'faithful', 'truthful' and 'cooperative' to the Government.

This attractively got-up book 'Kodavas', patronised by the Kodava Samaja, is a publicity bulletin that is just brought up to vindicate the disgraceful performance of a Government which was forced out of its existence both by the people who voted for its merger in the legislative assembly and by the High Power Commission which testified to its work as "the existing position is all the more unsatisfactory and cannot be continued indefinitely."

Yes, that could not continue 'indefinitely'. Within

only two years in 1954, the members of the legislative assembly voiced their disappointment over the performance of the Government stating that :—

“ I am forced to remark that it is unfortunate that in spite of the advent of freedom and democracy, the atmosphere in the State, and the administration has not changed for the better.”

Another member said :—

“ On the Cabinet rests the formation of the policy and once it is formed they are not to go and interfere with the day to day administration.”

The States Reorganization Commission said :—

“ The Governments of smaller areas, not having enough work in the field of policy-making, tend to undertake detailed and direct administration. When the lowest appointments are made in the highest level and those charged with responsibility of shaping major policies assume the role of district authorities or subordinate administrative agencies, the service must lose initiative, drive and sense of responsibility.”

There are many more such utterances of many other responsible persons and bodies. A few of the policies that were brought into severe criticism by the members of the opposite party in the legislature, were on the extensions granted to the then Chief Commissioner and to the superannuated local officers, appointment of an one-sided commission to go into the working of the cooperative societies, unequal and even unfair distributions of aid or loan to the victims suffered from floods, unfair distribution of

long-term loans, the menace of the people of the Intelligence department, misappropriation of funds of the various cooperative societies etc etc. Once when the members of the opposite party staged a walk out in the Assembly, they said submitting a memorandum to the Chair, as below :—

“The Chief Commissioner of a Part C State is expected to play the role of a Governor of a Part A State or of the Rajpramukh of Part B States, viz. that of advising and guiding those in charge of administration more particularly to protect the interests of the minorities and prevent injustice. He has the further advantage of being the Chairman of the Cabinet. But unfortunately we have been experiencing an administration of repression and victimization for the last two years. The extensions granted invariably to all superannuated officers including the Chief Commissioner in utter disregard to the countrywide protests, is deeply resented. In the circumstances, we feel it our duty as representatives of the people to register our protest by refraining from being present at the time of Chief Commissioner's address.”

But a politician in power would know the art of deceiving others by his talk, and the spokesman of the party answered to the above charge. He tried to save his face by talking about things which were not relevant to the point at issue. He said :

“It showed lack of appreciation of powers and privileges of officers under the constitution if occasions like address by the Chief Commissioner were used to demonstrate feelings on administrative matters—I

27 JUL 1972

can only view this incident as very unfortunate one—.”

He is right. With this ‘unfortunate’ incident many other things also happened throughout those four years and all those appeared like unfortunate ones. Explanations on everything, were always there but none of them served to help the situation. In a small area like Coorg, this glamour of self-rule created a sort of vanity, arrogance and autocracy. Once a week or so the cabinet would meet, discuss things and disperse, and very often the talks centred round trivial things and they used to be very often worried about the appointments of the menials, personal affairs of the government servants and about their imaginary opponents, and on distributing favours to partymen.

From the very beginning, a good deal of glaring cases of partiality, corruption charges, complaints on forest policy and many other things were all the subjects of day to day gossips. Numerous cases of misappropriation of funds of the co-operative societies, complaints against the ministers and even writ petitions in the High Court, ever so many charges against the then Chief Commissioner, several cases of maladministration, corruption, nepotism and so on, were the daily occurrence in those days which were all brought to light from time to time. It would take volumes to narrate those things in detail.

Therefore, as far as Coorg was concerned, there were several waiting to share the credit for all these ‘achievements’ of the ‘popular government’ of 1952 to 1956. Government of India who simply relied upon what their party Governments in the States said, the leaders of Karnataka who were anxious to see that Coorg was

merged, and the local politicians and officers of the day, were all proclaiming from the house top that they had achieved great things. They include this Author of the book 'Kodavas' also, who created 'mirror' out of that and he thinks that it 'reflects Coorg.' Hell be to that 'mirror' which gives a blurred and vicious image to deceive people who helped him with all sincerity by their 'generous' offer thinking that would give something worth about Coorg. On the other hand, he has murdered culture, distorted history and deceived people.

23. BUT THE KODAVAS FAILED.

I venture to state in brief about a few of the leading politicians of the time just in order to survey the political trend of those days till the year 1952 when the popular Government was formed. About the history of the political movement in Coorg till 1952, one might find the details in the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India" published in 1953.

Some kind of political or social activity in Coorg began from about the year 1910 with Codanda Madayya, Manyapanda Muthanna and Biddanda Ganapathy taking active part, and most of their activities were centred round the Coorg Landholders' Association, and sometimes taking lively interest in discussing openly on the issue of the future of Coorg. Apart from these three, there were no other political workers of significance in those days although there were quite a number of street peddlers who say that they "also ran".

The Legislative Council of 1924 brought forth a new set of leaders and among whom Paruvangada Kushalappa

and Pandianda Belliappa were the first two Congressmen in Coorg. Some recent chroniclers and self-styled politicians add some other names along with these two, but I knew them only as opportunists and not as true nationalists. The so-called Kodava Sabha politicians of the nineteen-twenties also failed as nationalists and their subsequent career and opportunistic tactics themselves testify to what I say. I may however refrain from naming any of those persons here because some of them are still living.

Paruvangada Kushalappa died very early in 1928. His associate Pandianda Belliappa, a Congressman from 1920, the Editor of the Kodagu Weekly from the very beginning, a member of the Coorg Legislative Council from 1924 to 1952, and of the Legislative Assembly till 1957, was a Gandhian politician, and yet he gathered around him many influential opponents, especially after he began to plead for the separation of Coorg from about 1932. His supporters were mainly the Kodavas and a few non-Kodavās. Belliappa failed to muster the non-Kodava support to his line of thinking and that was evident when he twice lost his position, first in 1946, and later in 1952.

Though a dedicated worker and an astute politician, Belliappa lacked selfless followers. In fact he was the lonely Congressman in Coorg, who indulged in many kinds of constructive works. He had no other wholetime workers with him. Even to support his separatist stand publicly there were hardly half a dozen people among whom I can name persons like Pattamada Ponnappa, Biddanda Cariappa, Haragada Muthanna of North Coorg and Pattada Uthayya, the retired District Education Officer. Belliappa, it seems to me, did not fore-see the storm that was blowing

against him and especially against his separatist stand.

Cheppudira Poonacha, an off-shoot of early forties, represented the merger party of Coorg and the non-Kodava political interests of Coorg, although he did not commit himself as such. He was saying that he was a servant of the 'people' and that was a nice way to play politics. The non-Kodava leaders adhered to the theory like "set a Kodava against a Kodava", and thus they found in Poonacha an opponent to Belliappa. The merger party of Coorg supported him and thus he got a better and easier start in politics that way. Poonacha was an astute and budding politician of great tact and charm, and also an old Congressman himself.

Poonacha fore-saw the future of Coorg more clearly than anyone else. He knew that the Kodavas were in a minority numerically in comparison to the rest of the people put together. He anticipated that when the adult franchise was introduced after the country became free, it was only the heads that were counted and not the brain inside them. The non-Kodava leaders pushed Poonacha forward, and thus the latter had the advantage of representing Coorg at regional and Central party organizations and Central legislatures.

In 1946, Poonacha was elected by the Coorg legislative Council as a representative from Coorg to the Constituent Assembly of India with only one vote majority. That insecure election made him to be more vocal about the people's wishes to prevail while deciding the future of Coorg, and he knew very well that those "people" were the non-Kodavas who formed the majority population in Coorg.

But I should here record that this election of a member to the constituent assembly, was unconstitutional, although it was conducted as to the directives of the Cabinet Mission plan of 1945, which recommended that only the elected members of the then Council ^{alone} ~~also~~ should have the right to choose the representative to the said Assembly, and that the European and the official members should not take part in that election. This directive was applicable to some other Indian states also.

That legislative council of Coorg of that time was formed by the members who were not elected, firstly on the basis of adult franchise, and, secondly, when they were elected a few years before that, the issue of the future of Coorg was not before the people and it was not talked of at all. Therefore, those who professed democracy had also the right to rebutt the Cabinet Mission Plan in connection with some provisions of this kind. Anyway things were done in a hurry, and the politicians at the Centre were in a damn hurry to see that they took over the reins of the Government from the British.

Pandianda Belliappa's opposition to that election and his boycott and protests were all perfectly right and constitutional. We can now take the instance of Kashmir where some leaders of that State still create difficulty on the issue of accession of that State to the Indian Union, and they say that the people's wishes were not ascertained when the State was forcibly merged at that time.

Anyway Poonacha was able to strengthen his political position from that time. Among the others who backed him, there were half a dozen Kodava and non-Kodava gentlemen, and all these were in a way defectors from

Belliappa's group when they found that Coorg's interest, according to them, was only in getting it merged into a neighbouring State. Here, of course, personal prejudices, jealousies and rivalries were all displayed in one way or the other.

Since the majority of the people were the non-Kodavas, it was natural that these different communities should gather under one banner to put down the Kodavas and their influence in Coorg. The Kodavas had occupied almost all the top official posts for a long time. The non-Kodavas would not like Kodavas being the Assistant Commissioners right from 1890 to 1954, as district magistrates from 1921 to 1954, as Superintendents of Police from 1922 to 1957, as Chief Commissioner from 1943 to 1948, as Chief justice of Mysore from 1948 to 1956, and the two generals in the Indian Army attracting the attention of the whole of India in addition to the numerous Kodavas occupying top official posts in the police, forest and other departments in many Indian states.

The trouble with the Kodavas was their number which was numerically small, and the anti-merger group lacked ardent workers to convince the non-Kodava population who were mostly the workers in the fields and farms on the benefit of keeping Coorg as a separate small unit. Moreover, the politicians and the neo-Congressmen who wore Gandhi caps only on ceremonial occasions and paraded in the streets, were only those sitting on the fence. In fact, there was a lack of good leadership in spite of their being many politicians. The 'Janma Bhoomi', Weekly edited by Ballachanda Belliappa was vehement in its argument in favour of merger. The Karnataka

Congress under which the Coorg District Congress functioned had the members of the merger group of Coorg in its provincial committee. Therefore the Kodavas were fast losing ground in the local politics, and the general election of 1952 decided the dilemma once and for all.

24. COORG AS A STATE WIPED OUT

Going to Jail with the tall claim as fighting for the country's freedom was considered in India for some time, as a qualification to come up in public life, and that was so all over India. But when the country achieved freedom the situation changed. A number of men who were sitting on the fence and a large number of such opportunists became members of the Congress party because, after that the Congress party itself survived in India with the artificial strength it acquired that way. In that Coorg was no exception and the amalgamation party that was blessed and nursed by the Karnataka Congress, worked on consolidating its hold on the people. In fact, they did play politics very well but not so the anti-merger group which merely relied on the soundness of their logic and the strength and influence of the Kodavas in spite of their knowing very well that they could not win unless they took a considerable number of non-Kodavas into their fold.

The amalgamationists were all out on working and educating the people to be prepared for the final show. They did not even hesitate to go round with the local Communists and in fact, they were mustering all their strength to capture power at any cost. Pleading for the merger of Coorg some years before that, they said.

"The smallness of the province with its inelastic sources of revenue, make it impossible to adopt any form of responsible Government."

While presenting a memorandum to the Government of India, they said :

"Coorg may be deleted from the second part of the first Schedule of the draft Constitution and that it may be formed part of the State of Mysore."

On another occasion, writing to the President of the Constituent Assembly of India, they said that :

"On behalf of the people of Coorg, we make an earnest appeal to bestow your serious consideration to our problem and decide once for all in favour of merger of this province with the Mysore State retaining its entity as a separate district."

With all this, Sardar Patel, who called the Coorg administration under the Chief Commissioners, a 'Rama Rajya' decided to retain a few small states as Part C States after a series of talks with the representatives of the people of the states concerned. The Part C States Act was passed in 1951 and Coorg was assured of having a 'responsible government'. The general election took place in 1952. The merger party assured the people that they would consult them when the issue of the future of Coorg arose, and the Prime Minister of India also in a letter assured the people to that effect. In the first general elections that took place in 1952, the merger party captured fifteen seats out of 24, and the anti-merger group nine. The latter group failed to secure even some reasonable support

from North Coorg and they could obtain only one seat from there. Thus, the Kodavas again failed for the second time.

The 'popular government started working with Cheppudira Poonacha and Kittur Mallappa as ministers, and in two years, probably after enjoying power, they and the merger group changed their stand on the future of Coorg and began to say that it was better that Coorg remained separate for all time. When the States Reorganisation Commission visited Coorg in June 1954, they decided to request them to recommend to retain Coorg as a separate state. The people were quick to find out the power politics of the people of the merger party when the latter suddenly changed their position. However, all the 24 members of the Coorg legislative assembly unanimously agreed to submit a joint memorandum to the S.R.C. and in a ten page typed sheets they said as below :

- (i) Coorg's boundaries are natural
- (ii) Historically it has been a separate state for centuries past
- (iii) It is the only Part C State which has the experience of a democratic institution since 1924
- (iv) It has some distinctive features of its own
- (v) It has always been a surplus area in food grains
- (vi) Its literacy has a high place in India
- (vii) In medical facilities it is probably only second to Delhi (Part C State)
- (viii) In cooperative movement it is second to none in India
- (ix) The condition of labour is decidedly better than elsewhere
- (x) It has a separate culture and individuality of its own
- (xi) It is more a multi-lingual State than a purely Kannada speaking

area (xii) It is self-sufficient in finances (xiii) As a separate and self-contented States, it will strengthen the Central Government, and (xiv) It is an ideal place to work out a model State."

But all these arguments were of no avail with the States Reorganization Commission, because they knew that none of these achievements was of recent origin and only the decades of British rule that was responsible for all these developments. Even to safeguard the culture and individuality of the people, and of the Kodavas, the British were responsible, let alone its financial and administrative developments. The S.R.C. also saw the game of power politics of the people of the merger group after coming to power and their contradictory memorandums they submitted before they came to power. I have quoted the S.R.C. report elsewhere.

Anyway, after all this, in November 1956, Coorg became a part of Karnataka. The State as well as the central Government of India had set the stage ready for that by that time. The local politicians forgot their own words given to the people, and the leaders of the anti-merger party of Coorg also were disgusted with the kind of a 'popular government' they had for four and odd years. Some of them voted straight for the merger of Coorg and two or three of them stood neutral without raising hands. At the other end, the Indian prime minister's promise which he gave four years prior to that had also become a hoax because they said that the people themselves were in favour of merger. But the common people who demonstrated outside the Mercara fort on the day when the merger issue was finally settled, were duped,

because it was the local politicians who decided things and not the people.

The Kodavas being in a minority could not do much, and also they displayed several weaknesses. They rarely unite in times of crisis. They had also been selfish, narrow-minded, unreliable, irreligious, avaricious and opportunistic. None of the ancient qualities that brought their ancestors some reputation, are seen in them today, and such a community should be as it is now and not more nor less. In the larger context, the whole of India, the Hindu India, is seen being reduced to that same status, a minority status—and that change seems to be taking place now but in a very gradual process.

Among those main characters of the drama of the day in Coorg, Pandianda Belliappa, the leader of the anti-merger group, died in 1966. He was the only active politician although in the true sense of the term, he was a disappointed man and his efforts were not rewarded. Niddemane Muddappa, probably the first graduate in the Gowdgal community and later their leader, died in 1954 while he was still a district judge, and his brother Somanna passed away in 1956 while he represented Coorg as a member of the Indian Parliament. Kittur Mallappa, a staunch anti-Kodava by temperament, and a lingayat by caste, became a minister of the Mysore Government in 1962 and died in office in 1966. Some other associates of these men also passed away between 1962 and 1967 and with the amalgamation of Coorg, the merger party people of Coorg felt very much relieved and they saw the influence of the Kodavas put down.

Here ends the chapter on Coorg history, and there

remains nothing for any one to feel proud of it today excepting its latent wealth, resources, hills and spectacular sceneries.

Now what I cannot understand is why, and why after all, the Author of the book 'Kodavas' did not do justice to the history of Coorg, which he attempted to narrate ? I can understand his pecuniary interest in trying to please the people to earn some 'generous' offer from the rich 'souls', but does he not realise the harm he was doing with that sort of distortion ?

No, he does not realise, because he is only a certified politician, like the certified Khadi lying unsold in the market. Once he was even pushed to contest an election without himself knowing what he had to say to the people. He had committed himself in a hundred ways by saying things in the paper which he was writing, and he had no political opinion of his own at all. As a result, people soon found him worth to be put in a shelf rather than make a political use of him, and the result is these self-praised and self-publicised books to mislead people.

25. A SHREWD AND AMBITIOUS POLITICIAN

"The congress high-ups are hungry for power and once they occupy the seats of power, they would not leave them till death. Ironically this has come true."

So said Bhulabai Desai in 1945. Therefore, what was true in 1945 was doubly or trebly true in 1968 with most of the politicians dying in office and thus terribly disrupting the

country's normal business Those hungry fellows died hugging power and their bag-loads of ill-gotten money.

In those days, as in these days, what was their way to come to power? They have to know only the art of bluffing. They would say that the whole country was corrupt when in fact except themselves and their merchant friends none else was corrupt. Such 'paupers became millionaires' within a very short time once they had their time. Even today their story is not different. They said that the British exploited the country but the events have amply proved that these self-styled nationalists were the worst specimens of exploitation and loot.

I said something about Cheppudira Poonacha. He too had belonged to that old gang of Congressmen. He secured a plump job and left for Delhi in 1959. It was rather wonderful to see how the old Congress machinery was working in those days of Nehru. The more his partymen were discredited the more bigger jobs he would offer to them. The more the politicians were branded for corruption and inefficiency either through popular vote or through High Court decisions, the more favoured they became of Nehru who protected them with good jobs exactly in the way he protected a swindler of the modern times, Dharam Teja, of the Jayanti Shipping Company. Thus Nehru was in his days a 'defence minister' of corrupt men and ministers.

Now, about Poonacha, a Delhi Weekly, 'Organizer' of August 1959, wrote something in bold types with the caption, 'Story of Poonacha a Job for a Matriculate', and added that :

'Poonacha hails from Coorg (It's true). He is not even a matriculate (It is not true). He tried to run a

small press in Mercara (Yes, he tried), but failed even in that (I don't think so). When independence came he became a Congressman. (I think he was saying that he was a Congressman even before that).

Poonacha was a matriculate, but in politics why should one have any education at all? Numerous uneducated people have come up as flourishing traders, and politics, after all, is another word for trade! In those days jail-going was an easy thing for one to get boosted up as an expert in politics and such men knew that most of those common people, rather foolishly, called them patriots when none of those jail-goers knew what patriotism was. And the British were too good as rulers who made the jail life equal to that of club life for all those jobless men. Inside the jail those opportunists were just brooding for their day to come, and, of course, a good many of them conducted roaring business even from inside their cells. All this is wonderful but astoundingly true. No one need have any doubt about all this! Nevertheless, some of the Indian politicians are a highly qualified lot in spite of lack of good leadership in the country. All those people, with very few exceptions, have miserably failed as honest administrators. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar once told them, rather bitterly, at a language convention in Kerala on the 20th February 1968, that:

"We have amply compensated the politicians for their 'sacrifices'. Let us now put sensible men in charge of affairs of the country".

Well, that was just that. Now, coming to what the 'Organizer' said about Poonacha, I think he owned the Ambika press, but I don't think he failed in it. He leased it to others and I may say that he made better money that

way. He joined as a Congress worker in those days but what he did there no one knows. He was one among the many who were sneakily waiting to grab any opportunity that would come in the event of the country becoming free. Indeed, I did not see him doing any public work anywhere and of any kind, but I could see him playing always some sort of hide-and-seek game. I am sorry to say that.

Some say that Poonacha was shrewd. That happens in everyone's case when luck kicks up such mediocres. To begin with he worked in Kodagu Press for some years and later from 1937, he shifted himself from there. He grinned at every available fellow in the streets, and that was perhaps another qualification to become a politician. He saw some provinces of India being administered by Congressmen in 1937-39. Poonacha saw that and that may be his shrewdness. He was also educated by some interested people that when adult franchise was introduced in the country, it was only heads that would be counted even if those were wooden heads. Poonacha saw that. He also saw that Kodavas were a minority community and his non-Kodava friends were by his side to tell him all that. He thought that if so many uneducated people elsewhere could become leaders why not he become one with his matriculation education? That was right, and rightly did he work out a way for himself to see which way the wind blew. Yes, the wind blew!

Leaving the Kodagu Press, Poonacha sat at Ambika Press. Either he failed there or passed, that press became his political headquarters. But that was a 'quarter' without a head because I didn't see Poonacha doing any social or Congress work though he made himself available to

those non-Kodava cliques of the Congress party of Coorg and of Karnataka. But he was talking at the market places, I was told, although I didn't hear what he was talking. He was best known to the people of those times as simply a politician struggling to come to some sort of power, first at the co-operative bank and then at the district board and then something else. The non-Kodava politicians and a few Kodava defectors were his supporters, and his opponent was Pandianda Belliappa who had brought him up to the forefront. Of course, Poonacha might say all that was his politics and need not be his betrayals. A politician alone would know the depth of his design.

It was not clear for what Poonacha stood. I think he stood for the people because he tirelessly, but again sneakily, called his opponents as selfish. He let others also to speak for him that way. Yes, all others were selfish. That was what those sorts of people were saying. They stood for people. The Communists of India, China and Russia also stand for people. They go wherever their people take them. But the world knows that the people were merely instruments of power and ambition of the politicians of this brand.

When some vakils like N. Somanna and K. Mallappa were just dabbling in politics along with their profession as well as their cinema tents to supplement their income, Poonacha with his private press and father's or grandfather's land was up as a leader of a group. But that group happened to have been a non-Kodava group which consisted of another half-a-dozen disgruntled Kodavas.

Well, coming to what the Delhi paper, 'Organizer', wrote those damaging remarks about Poonacha, I should

say that I was in Delhi at that time. After seeing that paper, I tried to contact the editor by phone and even told him that their information about the man was all wrong. I told that Poonacha was a great leader of Coorg. That was also a joke, because if I should glorify Coorg I must also say something great of some people like this to threaten those fellows of the North even though my saying was of little value. Yet I told them to report things correctly and not slander people like 'Gupta', the black-mailer. The 'Organizer' also wrote like this :

"When Jetti (the ex-chief minister of Mysore) replaced Nijalingappa (another ex-chief minister), he could not find a place for Poonacha."

That is correct, but why should he find a place for Poonacha— a man of Nijalingoo, (Copy-right—'Mother India' of Baburao Patel) ? The Nijalingappa cabinet that was formed with the birth of the state of Karnataka in November 1956, had to go out in about eighteen months in 1958, and people said that it was because of Poonacha.

Here some things look funny if I should recollect a few incidents. When Coorg was merged into Karnataka in 1956, it seemed as though only Poonacha merged heart and soul into it and that was how his chief Nijalingoo took it. That round man thought that Poonacha was an instrument to play a leading role in the merger drama of Coorg. That was true also. This man, Poonacha, made use of the separate existence of Coorg as a Province to play his own politics and thus rise up, and after his purpose was served, he kicked down the ladder through which he rose up. That was true also, but Poonacha might say

that it was the people who did it, and, he perhaps, only reaped the harvest.

When Nijalingappa formed his cabinet in November 1956, Poonacha was given or taken by himself the portfolios which at least four other ministers could have shared. Poonacha was thus a minister for home affairs, for industries and commerce, for transport and communications, for Information and broadcasting, and for what? This was a bumper crop of the year but that crop too soon proved to have been just a sort of borer.

Nijalingoo & Poonacha Company should now say as to who told them to load one minister with so many portfolios. This Company also should say as to whose opinion it was to retain the name 'Mysore' to the new state of Karnataka. This was a bungling affair lingering even now without being decided when it could have been settled right away at that time. Anyway Poonacha did not realise that the enlarged Mysore State was not a tiny taluk of Coorg where he went on playing his hide-and-seek politics to his advantage. However; the Mysoreans saw the game of this new bunch of show-pieces in the newly built Vidhana Soudha, with one man alone, and who was reputed to have been only a matriculate, holding so many portfolios. Those people, therefore, indulged in a silent revolt against this kind of mess, and, as a result, Poonacha was stripped off some of his portfolios like Transport, Information etc. But the revolt didn't end with that:

Poonacha was holding the portfolio of home affairs. He being neither a lawyer by qualification nor at least a village panchayat president by experience, the Mysoreans waited and watched his performance and finally caught

him in a minor incident that had not at all required so much of noise, and to the extent of ousting the entire cabinet. How far Poonacha was responsible for that is not clear from the proceedings of the Mysore legislative assembly, but the things worked badly against him and the ministry fell in 1958 with Nijalingoo wondering what after all happened within so short a time! But, however, this N.&P. Company had to wait for the brighter days to come to regain their fallen prestige. The Delhi news-journal gave another piece of information about Poonacha, and it said, that:

“Recently the manager of the Virarajpet Town Co-operative Bank committed suicide in suspicious circumstances. The Bank’s affairs are in a thorough mess. People in Coorg want an enquiry held. They are not getting it.”

Every word of this statement is correct, and that journal made Poonacha and his men responsible for this ‘thorough mess’, and that too was correct. This mess was one among another one-hundred of the type of those days, and all that happened in order to feed the bandicoots of the paddy stores and go-downs of Poonacha’s party. This Virarajpet case was a much talked of subject in 1956 when Coorg was still a separate state, and the news came to the surface in 1957 with the death of the bank manager. It is difficult to say if the affairs of that Bank have been set right even today after fourteen years of its collapse. (Ref. pages 422 to 431)

I had known the manager of the bank who had committed suicide. He was a simple man known for his integrity in service. He had belonged to the Konkan

Saraswat community. He was in the Canara Bank, and was a colleague of mine in the literary society which we had founded, and he did a good service there. Some one lured him away from the Canara Bank promising him better prospects elsewhere, but his fate took him round and round to become the manager of the Town Co-operative Bank.

That was that! Now, when Poonacha's day came after a year's political oblivion, he was given a job in Delhi. Evidently it showed that he and Nijalingoo were busy with their 'national service' of finding jobs to get themselves rehabilitated. One should here see how the Congress clique worked underneath. The man who ousted these two was the group led by B.D. Jetti who was considered to have been belonged to Morarji Desai's group, and in the Centre there was a powerful gang against Morarji who was then the Union finance minister. Indira Gandhi was the chief of the Congress party and for whose elevation to the post Nijalingoo too was responsible in a way and all that was to please Nehru and thus get on. This Nijalingoo was only doing that kind of uncalled for things most of the time he was there. In order to somehow get on with his politics he brought some ousted retired men like Panikkar, Srimali and others and rehabilitated them with jobs in Mysore. And again to win Nehru's favour he brought Tibetans into Mysore as though he had already fed all those starving millions of Mysore villages. Nijalingoo too had created so many 'Sangayya-s' in Mysore by surprisingly elevating or awarding some unknown people in order to win some section of people and with some such motives in his mind. Nijalin-

goo's politics from end to end was not only suicidal but entirely nonsense till he was forced into obscurity in 1971.

In 1959, Nijalingappa's idea was to see that Poonacha was accommodated first with a job, and on the latter getting one, he had the first recovery from his fall. After Poonacha was installed as the chief of trade corporation, Nijalingappa himself got appointed as the chief of the oil corporation. Another defeated man in the North, Keskar, soon became the chief of the book corporation, and yet another 'discredited progressive' Malaviya was in charge of the tool corporation, and remember, all these corporations like Nehru & Teja Company's shipping corporation, were reported as working on a loss of crores of rupees in about a few years. Now, see, what these people were doing! There were scores of corporations to house all the fallen idols, and that was Nehru's socialist pattern of society. Who says that Nehru was not a great bungler and builder of countrywide corporations? Of course, the rest of the folks in the States learnt from him all that sort of art of bungling and blundering.

Now coming to Poonacha's story, after he got the job in 1959, and with the same Congress clique working at the Centre, his was a case of 'steady and sure'. In January 1966, he became a deputy minister at the Centre and in April 1967, the Union Minister for railways, and as long as Nijalingoo was there either as the state chief or as the party chief, Poonacha was also there.

I don't know how the press had looked upon Poonacha and his work, and even I failed to see how he was working because nothing much came about him in the newspapers, and, that was, perhaps, he was cunning, and, had the

tendency to be in the good books of everyone in his own selfish interest just in order to get on with his job. Long back in the 1940s, it was easy for him to make a show as one going from Coorg, 'the land of generals', but later he became a representative of Mysore known for nothing but for those Khedda elephants and a dethroned Maharaja. Anyway, as to Poonacha's selfish politics, the comments of the press were very many both in and outside Mysore. Of course, inside Coorg, he is known well-àlight.

Poonacha presented a railway budget in May 1967 and several newspapers bitterly criticised that for various reasons, and The Hindu of the 23rd May, made it clear by saying, that: "the conclusion cannot be resisted that the railway minister has sought to exploit a difficult situation *for his advantage.*"

But Poonacha talked, and he ought to know how to talk. When he was taken to task at the parliament for the frequent railway accidents for which he was not at all in anyway responsible even as a minister, the *Swarajya* of the 10th March 1968, commented that, "Poonacha evaded all the specific questions put to him.....and gave the impression that he was concerned more with defending his ministry than protecting the interests of the people.

The politicians in India think that the whole world is as inefficient as themselves. From that basic stand-point they start their fraudulent career clinging to one political party or the other, and, of course, defections from one party or from one group to the other is a common practice today. There is no regret or shame attached to their actions because they say it is as good as blackmarketing or defrauding others, and they also add that the whole world is like

that. So when the whole world is like that why should they too be not like that ?

I am not sure if Poonacha did well in any assignment that he had undertaken to do because there is no record to support that he did anything well, either for himself or for others. In February 1969, there was a cabinet reshuffle at the Centre, and it was done, as the Eastern Economist, a Bombay Journal, had put it, "Not Omitting the Jokers." It was clear that Poonacha did not have a good relationship with the railway board, and the above journal added that, "It seems to be to the advantage of all concerned, including Poonacha, that another portfolio has been found for him", and that portfolio happened to be the 'Steel and Heavy Engineering', but he could not stay on there long to find how heavy the load was.

After that what happened or what has been happening and things like that are told at page 225 and other pages of different chapters of this book although the activities of these politicians are of little interest because theirs have been a day-to-day life and most of them are insipid and uninspiring characters. Now a days one could find any number of ex-ministers roaming in the streets jobless- some of them pot-bellied and some of 'lean and hungry' looks, always trying to grab any opportunity that may come in their way. However much such men get written about them by the paid cronies like Gupta and Guggu, theirs have always been a losing game and that could be seen by the fact how they end at last.

The general elections for the parliamentary seats held in 1971 revealed some more grim realities with the Mysore state of Nijalingoo & Company being routed from post to

post and from candidate to candidate, including Poonacha. No doubt, that spoke very eloquently of their 'popularity' they gained during the last twenty years of brow-beating and hood-winking the people in whose name they clamoured to come up. Look here, what Poonacha earned in the form of testimony which no one in Coorg had earned anywhere. After personally going through the administration of the various departments of Government of India, the Editor of the CURRENT, the Bombay Weekly, in its issue of the 25th May 1968, spoke out. Although it might seem at the outset, as exaggeration, the comments concerning Poonacha and the administration of railways, are interesting, because that applied to most of the Congressmen of the post-independence period. Some of the ministers and the deputy ministers of the earlier days were just the handpicked men of the party leaders, who were not known to any service, public morality, integrity or some such thing. Anyway, here is what the CURRENT of the above-mentioned date, said :

"Twenty years have passed since freedom came to India and if Poonacha's administration of the Indian railways may be judged from the state of the first class compartments (let alone the third class ones).....it is time he was pushed out of office and made to do some *Kheti* (farming) or, if he is rated as more intelligent, then social work in some village. But he is obviously not fit to run the Indian Railways."

PART III

‘GUPTA’

26. THIS IS LIKE TALKING SHOP.

I don't know who this pseudonymic Gupta is! An anonymous person like that may be a man or a woman or even an eunuch. Anyway the Kodagu Weekly is associated with one Gupta, and some say that this ‘Gupta’ was the one who brought out the book that I had reviewed in ‘the pages behind’. However, I like to state once again that I am trying to correct and explain some misleading statements made in that book, and taking those points as a basis, I like to state something that I feel like saying.

Suppose one says that Coorg is a ‘God-made-show-piece’, that should be either hypocrisy or ignorance—or both. Such laboured utterances are sheer deceptive. It is alright for some outsiders, tourists and some poets to say all that in order to flatter the local people but those people knew better than those inside Coorg that there are plenty of spectacular show-pieces everywhere and all over India. When a local man says such a thing without meaning that, it sounds knave. Another man too wrote that ‘Coorg-the only one on Earth’—and this is as absurd as it is true because there cannot be two of any one and the only place anywhere. These kinds of writers could be expert traders.

That's why I say that writing is an art and the highest duty of a writer, composer or an artist is to remain true to himself. If one is not that, one's production would just be a trash although they might produce things merely out of spite or just for money without meaning anything of what they produce or write.

Anyway, let me speak! Coorg is no longer beautiful.

It lost its beauty when it lost its statehood and separate identity. Now it is a pale and sick district between Mysore and Kerala, ripe for border troubles and linguistic quarrels. Thus Coorg has lost its charm. There is no need for any one to brag. Moreover, it is after all a part of 1000-mile long Malnad region which is fantastically beautiful and astoundingly panoramic. Even that Malnad is nothing before that amazingly beautiful African, European and Californian sceneries with ever so many colourful and soul-stirring sights all over the world where the lovely goddess of Earth unfolds her tantalising charms to those who have eyes to see, mind to ponder and heart to enjoy.

Therefore, I feel that these Gupta and Guggu of Coorg should shut up. They should not deceive people knowing very well that they don't believe all that they are writing. I am sure they didn't even see most of that small Coorg. The British were the first to hail that so-called beauty of Coorg about 180 years back in 1790s and with that they made it a separate state. Now what beauty is there in a dead thing?

While saying so, I must stress with all the pride that I possess that I have gone through the length and breadth of that small district and I have been up on the top of those many hills, and have been fascinated by the charm that Coorg unfolds. But now I don't find that beauty because the place has lost its glamour and identity. There are hills much higher than the Coorg hills.

The author of the book 'Kodavas' wrote in a hypocritical vein in order to hoodwink those poor people of Coorg, though they are rich in money, saying that he wished to be "born again in this bit of Divine Land of Coorg". What guarantee is there that he will be born

again ? Those 'generous souls' who gave him money, perhaps, to get themselves publicized through a paper of that sort, must have liked when their courtier wrote such things. But those are distortions, and in a simple language it is called cheating. However, such nonsense is not worth recounting here.

At page 200 of his book, he gave the name of one Sangayya, a farmer, who had the 'distinction' in 1952, of growing 12,200 pounds of paddy per acre. This all India news was suddenly cooked up only two months after the paleygars had emerged in Coorg to rule the roost. God alone knew as to where that Sangayya lived, in which field he grew that paddy, who measured all that lot of pounds and so on, in spite of their getting Sangayya dressed up and sending him all the way to Delhi to fetch his award with the fanfare that accompanied all that. In those days there was a strong criticism against such cooked up stunts. The treacherous Gupta too had criticised it and he criticised me also for writing that news in my book of 1953 as I had no reason to disbelieve that like anyone else in those days. How did that same damn fellow now deceive the whole lot of those boorish people by himself stating all that in his book after so many years ? There's no better instance for knavery.

But now I can confidently say that the story of Sangayya must have been a hoax like that of the Dhanalaxmi story. Those paleygars of that time very badly wanted to create some new spectacles in Coorg. Those old things like that being the 'land of generals' etc were almost becoming out of date. They needed some new excitements to boost their newly-found ego outside their Coorg *Samsthaana* and thus collect some money from the Centre to feed their

cronies. So they discovered at some far-off corner of the Kodlipet-Saklespur border one rare and unknown being called Sangayya and exhibited him to the people. To add to that spectacle, they soon found out one Dhanalaxmi as an ideal publicity stunt even through the documentary films, and for the whole of India. The Coorg doctors were just timid and useless to expose that Dhanalaxmi hoax and only those of Bangalore could do that right away. Now the fun is that even after so many years, the fake writers like Gupta had no guts to tell a single truth anywhere in the coloured 'wedding gift', which is also called a book, and of which Kodira Uthappa seemed to have been a distributing agent. I am sure, I am aware of what I am saying.

Pandikuthira Chengappa (page 210), one of the patrons of the book, said in his testimony, that it 'makes a fascinating reading, and that 'discovers an outstanding race'. I should rather rudely say that neither this Chengappa is a competent man to give an opinion on the book nor does it do anything of what he said, of course, I have explained a lot about that.

That author of 'Kodavas' has not given a true account of himself, let alone about others, to those men from whom he took some certificates for the purpose of his trade. If he said that he took interest in matters political at the age of 16, I should say the simple truth that he was "a tramp and loafer" as Pattamada Poovayya (page 547) would have liked to put it.

That was another damn humbug of a writer to say like that because in those days of freedom struggle in the 1930s, all those 18,000 children of Coorg schools have been shouting slogans of freedom at those donkeys which were in the streets. Also I may add that all the

students of all the schools of Coorg and of India, have walked out of their schools, and they included even the children of primary schools. It looks like that the retired Assistant Commissioner Kodira Uthappa wrote that only one boy took interest "in matters political" at that time, was just a humour and he did not mean it seriously. Further he says that the author is "a powerful and versatile thinker" and one "of wide reading" and with "knowledge of men and matters".

Very many words are very liberally used, but I want to know who exactly wrote that because expressions like "men and matters" would not come from the pen of an old esteemed University graduate of that calibre and of long service and experience. The information that the Author took to Journalism after 1942 is false. I have already said in the previous pages that he has told a lie to the retired Assistant Commissioner about that.

27. SELF-PUBLICITY HAS NO LIMITS!

All that the Author of the book, Kodavas, wrote was good, and I have already said that. But unfortunately, I see so many things not good, and I see them on the basis of records that are before me, and I am not insane to say anything bad of any one. In fact, I have written very many good things about so many people, and, whether they were good or bad, the readers themselves would judge, and they are free to criticise me. But when they do that, they must do it in writing as I do, and I don't like any sneaky business. I don't like any hypocrisy, and I don't like gossips, either.

Now I will take up the 'reviews' on this book 'Kodavas' that was published in some papers. This looks like a review on the reviews. Yes, it is a good thing that one should do that also to keep this field of trading in books clean. I have always welcomed all sorts of remarks about me or my trash writings. All those abuses and even curses have always helped me to look at myself very clearly. I have not blamed anyone for that when I knew their abuses have always been helpful to me in many ways.

Giving an impression, and not a review, of the book 'Kodavas', a gentleman wrote in the Kodagu Weekly of the 18th August 1967, and of which the Author himself is the Editor, stating that the Author had done a good job by collecting all those Kodava songs and customs in the form of a book.

I agree. Then the gentleman wrote that, "what Bhagawan Veda Vyasa did for humanity, the Author of the book, Kodavas, also did by writing that book for the benefit of Coorg, and, therefore, the book would serve as "a mirror" and adds that there would be no objection if he said so.

I too have no objection. But this gentleman brought the name of Veda Vyasa without knowing who was Veda Vyasa and what he wrote. He, perhaps, thinks that the Vedas were written by Veda Vyasa. This is like a name 'Black Forest' and that gentleman might think that it is called so because the Forest is 'black'.

Anyway it is nice to encourage a writer, but what he does not understand is that he is misleading the ignorant people at the same time. If that gentleman is also a politician like the Author of the book 'Kodavas' who is a

certified politician like certified Khadi, I have no objection to that too. I am yet to know, however, if that gentleman who wrote that and the Author of the book, 'Kodavas' who published the book both belong to the same local school of thought in politics, and if it is so, it is obvious that both of them should admire each other taking at least that book as an object of their mutual admiration.

Later, in the issue of the Kodagu Weekly, of which the Author himself is the Editor, another gentleman answered to the above note on the 1st September 1967, stating that what was said comparing this Author of the book, 'Kodavas' to Veda Vyasa, was too much, and added that it was beyond one's comprehension how he could write like that. The editor showed himself to be fair by publishing this note also.

In the following week, in the issue of the Kodagu Weekly of the 8th September 1967, the gentleman who had compared this Author to Veda Vyasa answered stating that he should not be misunderstood because what he actually wanted to say was, he said, that Author of the book, 'Kodavas' was like a Veda Vyasa of Coorg only and not a big Veda Vyasa of the type as one might think of him to be.

In the same issue of the Kodagu Weekly of which the Author himself is the Editor, and dated the 8th September 1967, one 'Samadarshi' wrote supporting the views expressed by the one who compared the Author to Veda Vyasa and said that that book was certainly good, and that has been appreciated by the retired assistant commissioner who gives the copies of the book as wedding gifts, and many others. In order to prove that he was really a 'Samadarshi',

he brought in the name of another local publication of a family album which was also criticised in the Kodagu Weekly of the previous week. Thus he made a real 'Samadarshi' business.

But I want to know why this Samadarshi—a fictitious name, did not give his actual name when the rest of the gentleman wrote giving their own names? The language of 'Samadarshi' and his reference to the testimony of the patrons of the book, 'Kodavas', made me guess that the author of that book himself wrote that calling himself 'Samadarshi'. Well, I have got evidence from his later writings to say that this Author himself had indulged in that dirty trick of self-publicity. The author who is also an Editor is only an employee of the Kodagu Company, and he uses and misuses the newspaper in that way by publishing things like that to boost his book trade.

This does not end there. In the same issue of the Kodagu Weekly of the 8th September 1967, one 'Scrutetor', another fictitious name, wrote a long review, although it was not actually a review. It is here I want to know again who exactly this man 'Scrutetor' is. The pseudonymic fellow says that among the Kodavas there are very few people who are broad-minded (means—this man 'Scrutetor' is very broad-minded), and proceeds saying that "if one looks into the history (as though he looked into history) and the manners of the people of Coorg", he says, "there are very few such (broad-minded) people now, and this is clearly brought out by way of explanation in the book, 'Kodavas'".

Just like 'Samadarshi', this 'Scrutetor' also had no business to hide his head and write such a thing which is

not at all true. Both this un-named fellows, it seems to me, were self-publicising, or one man with two different names, was self-publicising his own book and thus misleading the people calling himself broad-minded on one hand and slandering the people on the other. The Kodagu Weekly, it seems to me again, is not serving the people as expected, and it is simply left in charge of 'Samadarshi' and 'Scrutetor' like people for self-publicity.

The 'Scrutetor' says some more nonsense in that article. He says that " the Kodavas have assimilated all useful and durable customs, and in that way, as the Author of the book, Kodavas says, (here, everytime he mentions the name of that Author lest the people would forget him) that they (Kodavas) in a way have adopted an universal religion."

This is another piece of humbug and self-advertisement through a paper of which the Author himself is the editor, and also an employee there. But what would be interesting is to see that both these 'Samadarshi' and 'Scrutetor' come out from their cellars and explain why they were hiding when there was nothing at all for them to conceal their true names in the thing they wrote. All these, it appears to me, are some misleading stunts and self-publicity.

In the pink coloured pamphlet, the author of the book, 'Kodavas' said that about Rs. 10,000 loan, and aid from many other sources he got to write a book of 224 pages, of which he had already sold 900 copies within six months taking advantage of his being an editor of a small country paper, he again implores the people to buy books and thus patronise him. Furthermore he says that the copies would serve as 'wedding gifts' and he

issued the leaflet just on the eve of the wedding season. He also said that the copies of the book have gone to all countries including the Mauritius islands, when actually he meant, I should say, the island of Andamans where there are a few Kodavas.

However this art of self-publicity looks like a trade that is carried on in the name of Kodavas and their culture. I have no objection if anyone does it in a straight way and if the work merits that publicity.

After this self-glorification business was over, this author of the book, 'Kodavas' took to another type of hoodwinking business as an editor. He published another article in the issue of the Kodagu Weekly of the 12th January 1968 of one 'Sudhakara', again another fictitious name specially invented for the occasion. He caught hold of one or two rich people and supported them and their public work, because they were found to have been victims of some public gossip. Therefore, this 'Sudhakara' took the opportunity to go to their rescue and say that, "those critics of those rich fellows, as the author of the book 'Kodavas' says, would even disgrace God if He happens to come down to earth."

Look, this was what "Sudhakara" wrote in order to vindicate the honour of those rich men and the editor published that, although I am not sure if the editor who is the author of that book, himself was 'Sudhakara'. It does not end there, however. "Sudhakara" quotes a few lines of a poem written by the Author-Cum-Editor, and says that the latter who is also a poet, said such and such a thing. So with the publication of that stuff, the editor goes in search of new patrons, and his very high-sounding

poems were to be read by those rich men including those of primary and middle school education, and they in turn, would call this "Sudhakara" as Valmiki of Coorg and might also make another trayful of 'generous offer'.

Anyway let me state to make sure that I have known these writings of the fictitious characters like 'Samadarshi', 'Scrutator', and 'Gupta' and that I cannot be deceived by his or their intentions and hidden designs as the people of Coorg had been all the time and for a very long time too.

28. REVIEWS IN PAPERS—OUTSIDE COORG

I did not see all the reviews on the book, 'Kodavas' that appeared to the papers outside Coorg although I have seen a few of them and one or two translations of those made by the Author himself, and printed in the Kodagu Weekly of which he himself is the editor.

Dr. Krishna Iyer, an author of "The Coorg Tribes and castes" reviewed the book, 'Kodavas' in one of the Madras dailies. In that long note he told all that was known to himself about Coorg and nothing about the book under review. In the last paragraph he says that it is a valuable contribution on culture of the Coorg people, and recommends the book that was written on "a warrior race to be read by the students of sociology".

Dr. Krishna Iyer has evidently not seen all that is written in the book. He did not do that because he knows much more about Coorg than what is written in the book that he reviewed. Therefore, he wrote much of what he had known in a general way. But the author of the book,

'Kodavas' translated that and published that in his paper thinking that it would help him to boost the sale of his book.

Mr. Adiseshayya reviewed the book, 'Kodavas' in 'the Hindu' of the 6th August 1967. It was a short note of two small paragraphs. In the first he has quoted from Gen. Cariappa's 'Foreword', and in the second, he said that :

* The book (Kodavas) describes various aspects of the community life of people inhabiting the hilly country of Coorg, taking the reader into many interesting and intimate details.....".

Mr. Adiseshayya did not read the book. He saw only the Author's blurbs on the wrapper and then put the same thing in a different way.

I could not see any other reviews either in Kannada papers or any other English papers, and if there were any, I could make out the trend of their reviews because most of them would be just formal. The reviewers would be usually kind and they would not hurt the authors. In the Hindustan Times, I saw a review on the book, 'Kodavas', made by one L.A.N. He said that :

" There are several accounts of Coorg and its people—recorded by people coming from outside. An objective study made by one belonging to the community itself has a special value of its own. The writer in such a case, has the advantage of seeing things in their true perspective as well as in depth, and therefore, in drawing a picture which has more life and warmth."

After telling this, L.A.N. writes the rest of the things. Now it is here I should say that a reviewer of a book should always be one who knows the subject about which the book is written. Otherwise, if one is asked to review a book on Eskimos about whom he had not at all heard or seen, he would have to just be satisfied with what has been given in the book and assume that the author has done well on the subject.

Mr. L.A.N. is one of that type. As to the Kodava songs, he rightly says that they "are beautiful poetry even in the translation". Then he says :

"In the concluding pages the author has given some background information about Coorg which will be found useful by the general reader. There are eight coloured reproductions and six drawings.....".

I don't have to make any comments on that. But what he said after that makes sense. He said that :

"It would be unmitigated loss to the cultural heritage of the country if its distinctive groups are lost in the present inexorably hurried pace towards integrationThe smaller groups, alas, have not the power to press their claims; they can appeal only to the good sense of those in charge of policy-making."

Saying this, Mr. L.A.N. suggested that the sociologists would "find the book, 'Kodavas' of special interest." It is true, but I am worried about the things that are misinterpreted in that book both on facts about culture and history. However, these are some of the specimens of the 'reviews'. Excepting Dr. Krishna Iyer who knows Coorg, but did not say anything about the book under review,

the others just dealt with it in a general way, and that's all they can do, and so also a couple of foreign book agencies who gave testimonies to the author who published them in the paper that he is editing.

29. "AN ACT.... HIGHLY MISCHIEVOUS"

I have reviewed some of the 'good books' of the author of the book 'Kodavas' in the issues of the SHAKTI daily of Coorg, dated the 1-4-1960 and 6-10-1962. Some papers outside Coorg also have reviewed those 'good books' and they have said what they are.

'Maanava' was one of his 'good books', and as some of his small Kannada books, this 'Maanava' was also not his original production. In that he wrote things as though he knew anything of what he had written. He had, however, admitted that much of it was taken from the Western writers. He could have called it a translation of those writings into Kannada, but he did'nt.

A couple of his other 'good books' were also reviewed by some out-side agencies, but the author of the book, 'Kodavas' kept all that as secret from the people of Coorg because it was to them he wants to show as a 'Veda Vyasa' as one of his friends said, and as the author himself published.

It is not a happy thing for me to recollect all that a fellow-writer was talking against his brother-writer in order to put the latter down and very often with fictitious names. Anyway, I may give some recent incidents which may be of some interest to the future writers.

When I was in Coorg in 1960 on a holiday, I happened

to see a book of the author of the 'Kodavas', captioned as 'Kannī Kaveri'. The coloured cover page of the book showed an appearance of a gorgeously dressed prostitute. The author wanted the Coorg readers to think that it was his novel in Kannada. Along with that he produced another small book and that was something like a collection of 'sayings', and it was not clear as to whose 'sayings' they were. He wanted the people to think that those were his. I read both the books and found them to be very disappointing. I could not keep quiet without reviewing both the books.

I wrote the review and sent it to the Kodagu Weekly, but the author of those books who was also a worker there, would not publish it because he obviously wanted things that would help raise his own image as a writer of novels and classics. But then I sent the copy of the review to the Shakti Daily, and they published that in their issue of the 1st April 1960.

Though I am not a good cook myself, I can taste what the others had cooked. I wrote about the worthlessness of the books, and also I warned the author not to quote from others' works without mentioning the names of those earlier writers, and, thirdly I made it clear to him stating that the whole trend of his writing was a literary fraud, and it did not anywhere reveal any originality nor intellectual honesty. It was only then he came to know that I could express strongly against him and against his writings, because till then for about twenty years, I had not told anything about him with anyone or to himself, although from the days I was a school student, I had known his mischief committed from his cellar of the press. I had not

known him personally nor did I take the trouble of knowing such people as I was busy in my 'own world'.

While I was in Coorg in 1962, I saw another Kannada book of his called 'Coorg & Kodavas'. This was the book that I saw as a transcription of the celebrated 'Pattole Palame'. Excepting those few pages in the beginning and in the end of the book, the rest of the things, I found, as copied from that old work. Another thing was that he did not seem to have taken my warning seriously, given two years prior to that. He thought that I was out of Coorg and out of India and that I would never notice his fraud. He did the same mistake again and this I considered as deliberate mischief. Therefore, I contacted a lawyer in Bangalore and told him to proceed legally with the matter. Accordingly that gentleman served a notice on the author of the book, 'Kodavas' on the 31st August 1962. It said that :

".....That you have copied verbatim the following passages.....Our client instructs us that you have infringed the copy-right to print and publish the same without the license from our client.....without even acknowledgement, which act of yours is highly mischievous, and we hereby call upon you to publish a full and unqualified apology in the next three consecutive issues of the daily paper 'Shakti' and the Weekly 'Kodagu', published from Mercara.

" You persisted in your illegal act of printing and publishing the matters above-said in spite of our client having warned you, in the daily paper 'Shakti'.. ...

" This is, therefore, to call upon you that if you fail to tender an unconditional apology for the infringe-

ment of the copy-right of our client within a week of the receipt of this notice..... please note that our client will be compelled to file a criminal and civil proceedings against you for the aforesaid infringement and also to sue you for damages..... and for the seizure of all copies of your book..... and for all other appropriate reliefs."

What the man who received such a notice as above, could do except to apologise immediately ? That he did, and I too did not pursue the matter further.

But in the ' Shakti ' of the 6th October 1962, I wrote review on the same Kannada book, and, of course, I had to criticise on many things concerning the book, and then I concluded that saying :

" This book (in Kannada) is not an original one. 75 percent of that is taken from ' Pattole Palame '. This should not have been done. This is called misappropriation of copy-right and violation of the copy-right rules. The Kodava Samaja should look into this thing....."

But the Kodava Samaja was not a ' Samaja ' to take such things seriously. They, perhaps had no time at all what one may write in newspapers. When the public remain so indifferent towards such things, the politicians and the certified politicians could have their day, and that is exactly the history of Coorg and of India. People generally attribute motives for anything said by anyone and then gossip over that and then forget the whole thing.

Whatever that may be, what that ' Samaja ' could not know or care to know, was known by the author of the

book, 'Kodavas', and he took the hint to his advantage. He took the earliest opportunity to search for some 'generous souls' in the 'Samaja' and then managed to get up a book in English, called 'Kodavas'. He also managed to get a loan from the Kodava Samaja and the Kodava Education Fund to an extent of Rs. 10,000 in addition to the aid he got from private individuals whereas a poor student should struggle hard with those agencies to get a loan of some amount to prosecute his studies and for which purpose the Education Fund is supposed to extend its helping hand.

But this author of the book, 'Kodavas' is also an editor of a small local newspaper, and all his 'good books' came out as a result of the help rendered by the 'generous souls', and those 'souls', no doubt, helped an editor so that the latter could continue his 'literary career'. Yes, I get the point.

And, it is said that the author of that book was a recipient of a state award for 'one of his publications'. That is right. Till then we had only a Krishi Pandit Sangayya with an all India award. But which is that 'one of his publications' that got him a state award? Is it the same that was also the recipient of the lawyer notice for infringing the copy-right? Is it the same book that I had reviewed and said that most of it was copied from the other books? Is it the same book which, he said, in a pink paper stating that about 700 copies are still lying unsold?

Yes, that was the same book. That year the State Government distributed money in the form of aid, and they paid to almost all the writers for their books of the

year, maybe, with some exceptions. I don't know if those award givers had seen any of those books. Even if they had seen they would not be the competent men to evaluate books on some regional culture which is foreign to them. They would not be knowing that there were books already written on the same subject and that the modern productions were just the modifications of those original works. In fact, in 1962, I wrote to the Press stating that an award given to such books must be taken as awards given to those original writers who are no more. I said that people who evaluate books on different subjects should be experts in those subjects and that they must be able to judge the genuineness of the books submitted to the government for consideration of awards.

I say all this not only in connection with this book that was awarded, but also in connection with the other books of the type. Such things are serious, and that aspect of the literary out-put requires judicious evaluation. The newspaper reviewers of the books would not be able to do that, and, in fact, the reviews in the newspapers could never be taken seriously, and, in most cases they just skip off either with some flattery or with some spiced critical remarks, and, in that, it very often depends upon the mood of the reviewers of the books or their political and some kinds of interests or bias.

30. "LITERARY CAREER" WITH JOURNALISTIC MISCHIEF.

All this happened in 1960 and 1962, and seven years have now passed. In 1966 I had sent an article to the

Kodagu Weekly with my pen-name for publication. The editor published that in the issue of the 29th April 1966, but there was his mischief again. He struck off my pen-name or the fictitious name and put my actual name there to tell his readers that it was I who was the writer of that article.

The Kodavas say that they are a gallant people just because some great generals of the modern as well as ancient times, but what to call this kind of people? Who are the wolves in lambs' skin? What type of people are they?

I was in contact with some people there mainly on sentimental grounds. That esteemed elderly gentleman, Kotera Chinnappa, was writing to me to write articles on some subjects in the 'Kodagu Weekly', and then it occurred to me to write on a subject that suddenly flashed to my mind after I saw the names, the modern names, of about forty Kodava boys and girls, published in the 'Kodagu' informing that they were the recipients of some financial aid from the Kodava Education Fund. The names like Prakasha, Ullasa, Prabhakara, Ramesha, Girisha and so on sounded to me as unusual and far from traditional pattern, and I thought that this small race was racing to its doom and thus trying to get itself annihilated as early as possible.

Therefore, I felt that I give a word of caution to the parents who fancy themselves to name their children that way. In the article that I wrote in that connection, I said among other things, the following :

".....I hope that the Kodavas are trying to preserve their age-old colourful culture pattern. The

distinct features of our culture are not only those national costumes, customs, dances and so on. The traditional form of the Kodava names are also equally significant for our culture to remain in tact.

* We are a people who always bow down to power, be it political, official or economic. But should we not realise that in cultural matters we are the masters of ourselves, and see that we respect tradition and foster culture. The Kodava Education Fund Committee have power to grant financial aid to the students who apply for the same. Why not the members of the Committee tell those children with peculiar non-Kodava names that they would not be given the financial aid from the Fund to prosecute their studies? Such children with any kind of names might acquire education and later prosper but what could community expect out of them?

"It is not fair to minimise the importance that lie in the art of naming. Why do we call Kodagu and not Coorg, why do we want to say Karnataka and not Mysore, why do they call Tamil Nad and not Madras State, and why Bharat and not India? The Kodavas should realise that it was due to the British they got some recognition in the last century and it is now up to us that we maintain our cultural entity....."

Thus I pleaded with the defaulting parents saying that this folly of naming the children in the way they are doing should not be allowed to go too far. In the opening chapter of this book, I said that the Kodagu Weekly published this article on the 15th of March 1968. Here

one could see a man who got certified as 'high thinking' indulging in a high class mischief, and I should say, with criminal intentions. I had given my name in that article only as 'Muthanna' but the editor added to that within brackets, a word—'Canada'.

What was his motive here? Well, that was answered by the editor himself in the very next week when he published the pseudo-named Gupta's article in reply to that of mine. This Gupta had nothing pertinent to say in reply to my observations, but, on the other hand, he took the earliest opportunity to throw his venom at me by all sorts of irrelevant, damaging and insinuating remarks. All this he did to a man who was somewhere in the far off corner of the world, and the man 'Gupta' himself hiding in a dark cellar with a fictitious name, and the editor telling his readers in advance that that Muthanna was no other than the one who was in 'Canada'.

Moreover, the editor of that small country newspaper of two sheets, remembers my having sent him the lawyer's notice years back. He would not forget that although I had forgotten that not realising that the tails of the dogs are always crooked and that they can't be straight. This is Number One.

The editor posed that he too could write something about culture and then published Gupta's 'un-culture' (not uncultured) article. That is wonderful about the editor and Gupta. That looks like trading with 'culture' with the money gathered from the 'generous souls' of Coorg. This is Number Two.

With the emergence of the editor's book, some great personalities like 'Samadarshi', 'Scrutator', 'Sudhakara',

'Gupta' and ever so many such fellows also emerged all of a sudden through that paper, 'Kodagu', to certify the writer of that book as "broadminded, progressive", and so on. I have said all about these bogus figures, and there I see self-publicity and journalistic mischief to mislead people. This is Number Three.

Gupta's article in reply to that of mine was printed by the editor who wrote on culture without himself knowing what he wrote, is certainly interesting. I am proud to give the translation here of those abusive sentences which are not at all relevant to the article that I wrote. This is Number Four.

The article of Gupta in the Kodagu Weekly of 22-3-1968 was printed in the centre page, and was captioned as "Reactionary Idea-Names are not culture". Then he proceeds to say that :—

"I read an article of Mr. Muthanna in the issue of the 'Kadagu' last week. After travelling all over he wrote from the other end of the world, and I am sorry to say that his ideas reveal that he is not broad-minded."

Yes, I did not measure my head with a tape and also the mind which this strange Gupta could measure and see if it was broad or bent. A fellow called "Scrutetor" also said that someone's mind was 'broad'. That's right in the case of all the frogs in the well. That is Number Five. Next sentence of 'Gupta' was this :

"Thinking that America is just down below this (who thought, what ?) of ours, he (Mr. Muthanna) says (where ?) that America is itself is PATAALA."

This is another irrelevant shot to deceive people. All such things come out of the head of the frustrated. It was to tell this the editor had already, and maliciously too, introduced me a week before, that I was in 'Pataala'. So this culture-writer and his friend Gupta are the Siamese twins with one head and two names. He continued :

"Mr. Muthanna writes that the names of persons are also the marks of culture. He may be a lover of culture, but I feel that his love for culture is sheer **DURABHIMANA**.

This is Number Six. I get his nonsense more and more now. Further he said that :—

"He (Mr. Muthanna) says that financial benefit should not be extended to such students who have their names in a different way, and this is **DURABHIMANA** and that is how I think about it."

Yes, he thinks like that. With filth in his head what else could he think? I had only suggested that the Samaja should think of telling such children with strange names that they would not be given financial aid. It won't be **DURABHIMANA** but can just be called **SAT-ABHIMANA**. That is the only way to impose social discipline and that was what the ancestors were doing. But what I should here ask is why the fellows who did not know anything of culture write books on that subject? Is it to deceive people? Certainly it is so, and that is one of the ways to collect money from 'generous souls'. Yes, that's correct. Gupta writes that :

"In the organization of the Kodava Education Fund and the Samaja, there are people who are more

learned, more experienced and well-versed in the world affairs, and also those who are wiser than him (Mr. Muthanna)."

This is nonsense Number Eight. Who told that man that all such fellows were not there in Coorg? That man wanted to do two things here. Abusing me and flattering his patrons from whom he can again think of getting some money. The publisher of the article is certainly versatile and that is the versatility in mischief. Look, what he further says :—

"There are people here (in Coorg) who have been liberally contributing their resources and services for the development of the Samaja."

This is Number Nine. Why does this man create such imaginary charges and answers himself? Yes, the crows always think that they are singing melodious songs when actually they go on just crowing. Look, what this man said after that :—

"As far as I know, except showing some shallow sentimental love in words on paper, Mr. Muthanna has not done any service to the Samaja or to the Coorg Education Fund."

This is Number Ten. On this point, my answer is in the pages ahead. These are not merely insinuations, but abuses, and this kind of social menace is the curse of our country today. However, this man requires to be taught something. The below sentence reveals the viciousness of the man who published it It said :

"I remember reading an article of Mr. Muthanna in this same paper sometime back in which he criti-

cised those philonthropists whose photographs are in the walls of the Samaja building."

This is Number Eleven. This self-styled politician is certainly sick in mind. I did not criticise those philonthropists and their photographs in my article of August 1965. I only said that the amount of money contributed by those gentlemen in the Samaja should be somewhat commensurate to the honour done to them by decorating the Samaja hall with their photographs. Even now I hold on to the same view. That apart, I may again ask how these things arise as relevant answers to my article of 15—3—1968.

Yes, I understand. As already said, his motive is to abuse me and at the same time flatter those 'money bags' with the ulterior motive of deriving some pecuniary benefit again in some form. The man also wrote as below :

"I am not sure if Mr. Muthanna has studied the historical significance of the Kodava names. If he has not done that, better he does so."

My answer to this is, damn it. Further he said that :—

"Mr. Muthanna's ideas are out-dated to the world of today——It is a mark of progress when the way of life of people, their traditional pettern of names etc changes."

This man has to learn a lot, but it is no use of teaching him now. But I should again say that he is sick, and his mind filthy. However, in a general way I may say that the changes taking place in the material sense like the change from the bullock-cart age to the rocket age, is

progress. But changes taking place in the spiritual and cultural fieldes often take a perverted form and that is what is seen all over the world today. To violate the spiritual and cultural ideals and principles which are acknowledged as the best, is just an attempt to drift towards barbarism. The ethical, religious and cultural principles are there on the solid foundation of moral and conventional precedents, and violating them is like uprooting the age-old banyan tree that was protecting the millions with its shade.

Tradition need not always be superstitious. Traditions of value and moral substance that flowed for centuries have religious and ethical significance, and the modern man trying to shatter them calling himself progressive, is just a violent brute who will never know what he is up to. The communism is doing such things but that is a temporary phase of historical evolution of the century, and sooner or later, mankind has to realise that moral, ethical and religious ideals alone should save them and not these slogans raised on account of political and economic bickerings that has now swept the world. In that respect, India is in a very irksome situation today and the Hinduism is facing a serious crisis due to the lack of ancient spirit and ethical ideals in action. This sort of drift is not progress; it is sheer madness, and to call one who says to hold on to the ancient moral traditions, culture etc as out-dated, is itself a joke that is perpetrated to misguide people with falsehood and deception.

The writers of the sort like Gupta, and the printers of the kind like the editor, are many, and they only trade with a kind of culture business. They might write things

in which they have no faith. Gupta says and the editor prints stating that "the Kodava characteristics are much more deeper and wider in concept than merely the national costumes, names, their addresses etc." This is his fourteenth sentence that he cooed in vain. If all those cultural marks disappear, the deeper, and wider thing that remains is just a naked body of a brute. Anyway, it is a pity that we have a man to write and self-advertise uncalled for things with bogus names like Gupta, Samadarshi, Scrutetor, Sudhakara, and, what else ?

The man ends his article quoting some nonsense, and, I wrote to him that the sentence quoted there has no sense, and when it is so, there is no use of reproducing that here.

I got this article rather sooner than I had expected. And then I wrote to one or two educated people of Coorg about Gupta's article, but it was my foolishness that I did so. Those educated fellows knew only some English which is also known and spoken by fishermen and lumbermen elsewhere, and they could not understand Gupta's philosophy. They were all under the impression that all that Gupta and others with fictitious names wrote were some metaphysical theories and that was beyond their power to understand. They found it very difficult to assimilate, and thought that Gupta's writings are a new exposition of Adwaita philosophy.

Therefore, I referred this to an advocate to find out the secrets of Gupta's new abusive philosophy as each one of the above fourteen points were at least worth Rs. 500 as damages. I wrote to him to see if Gupta could be made to pay the damages plus cost for all his meritorious services that he was rendering to the Samaja and to himself through

the Kodagu Weekly, by misleading people often hiding his head with fictitious names, tampering with and defacing the articles contributed by others, and for self-publicising and trading on 'culture' in the way that has been just told in the pages behind.

31. 'THE KODAGU'—A VICIOUS JOURNAL.

It (the Kodagu) is also a fraud on the people of Coorg. Anyway, having said so much about this local small Weekly, I feel that I should do some research about 'Gupta'. I was able to get him through three sources and the revelation was not a surprise to me because I had already known who the man was. Nevertheless, my understanding about 'Gupta' was confirmed through a letter of the 1st May 1968, by an esteemed elderly man who wrote to me saying that :—

"Regarding 'G'. (I mean Gupta), I entirely agree with you. It is he that replied to your article."

Another responsible gentleman wrote in his letter of the 19th May 1968 stating that :—

".....'G.' (I mean, Gupta) is none other than 'G'. (I mean, Gupta). From your letter I could catch the story behind his malicious ways."

And yet another leading public man, a non-Kodava, wrote to me on the 3rd July 1968 that :—

"What can I add about 'G'. (I mean, Gupta) to what you have already known about the man? His intentions are not pure and he seems to take pleasure

in others experiencing pain. He will not hesitate even to inflict pain on others as long as he could remain undetected. This mental make up of his seems to be at the root of all his undesirable actions."

From all these testimonies about 'G'. (I mean, Gupta) all my doubts about him were clear. Now I should illustrate some more things about the man who writes the paper. He did it in the public and to the knowledge of the public, and I must now blast him off whoever he may be. What else one could do about the people like this ?

In 1955 and 1956, the Kodagu Weekly was publishing a series of charges and allegations against the so called popular Government of the time. If all that the paper carried was a truth, I should say that the man, the author of the book 'Kodavas' wrote in his book everything false and distortious. The popular Government though unpopular and repressive, it saw that this Kodagu Weekly which had no decency or decorum, was condemned outright. It was a newspaper that was insinuating people, but always hiding its head with bogus names. Many a time in the past, and particularly in 1950, the Chief Commissioner himself took serious objection for that kind of hide and seek writing business, and the Government never recognised the existence of such a paper in the reports sent to the Government of India in those days. Through a circular of the 2nd February 1956, Dis. No. 5809, they even saw that no government advertisements were given to that journal, and, thus it was thoroughly squeezed dry as a piece of paper in the scrape heap.

The Kodagu Weekly might say that all that was due

to its being a paper of the opposite party, and because it was criticising the policies of the then Government. That was true, but the fact was that the newspaper itself was not free from charges of indulging in character assassination of the people. The Kodavas thought that all that was published in that paper was true, while the motive of the journal was to disparage the individuals.

In those days I seldom wrote articles, but somehow the 'Kodagu' used to contain articles sometimes written by 'I. M. M.' or by one 'Muthanna'. That was how the man there played his dirty tricks.

I am fully aware of the fact that there may be any number of people with that name and there was no need for me to worry about that. But when people asked me whether it was I who wrote such articles, I had to explain to them that the Kodagu Weekly was just a paper well-versed in villainy and literary fraud. In a way it was prostituting journalism, I said.

Let me now give an illustration here. After the popular government of Coorg left for Mysore in November 1956 to become more popular there, the man at the Kodagu Weekly, began to raise his head from inside the cellar and thus show up. In the 'Kodagu' of the 1st February 1957, that is, after there was no more of that so-called popular and repressive government, he published a review of his 'good books' himself, and that review was supposed to have been written by one Murti Rao of Hyderabad. I can't say which Hyderabad it is, whether of India or of Pakistan. This Murti Rao of Hyderabad was a new man to me, and from Hyderabad he wrote that review. The man of the Kodagu Weekly found the time opportune to

pull out that review written by Murti Rao just after the popular Government ceased to be popular. Look, Murti Rao is stated to have said as below :

“ One could almost say that there are no writers in Coorg who are interested in working in the field of Kannada literature.”

I don't believe that a man from Hyderabad said this. If he had said so, I would ask the man who published that to come out with the original copy of the paper where he wrote that. This is a treachery of journalism to mislead the ' boorish ' people of Coorg. Furthermore, Murti Rao is supposed to have said that :

“ I have heard that one Appaneravanda Appacha Kavi wrote some dramas in the Kodava dialect using the Kannada script.”

Here it appeared that this man from Hyderabad had heard about Appacha Kavi even in those days. Was it through the All India Radio he heard about the Kavi ? The fun of it was that Murti Rao even knew the family name of the Kavi. Further he wrote that :—

“ In the past we used to hear (as though the man referred to was dead) the name of M. S. Ananthapadmanabha Rao from Coorg. Now his name is not heard. Probably he is getting old and his activity must have altogether ceased.”

This is a damn lie that Murti Rao said, and the man of the 'Kodagu' shamelessly agreed with those defamatory statements while publishing that. Poor Ananthapadmanabha Rao was certainly let down. He was not old, and,

perhaps, he had not yet retired from service then. Moreover, it is an insult to Ananthapadmanabha Rao who is still active in Shimoga as I write this in July 1968, with his classical literary productions. He is not producing adulterated works like the author of the book, 'Kodavas'. Anyway, the interest lies in seeing where the man of the Kodagu Weekly leading his ill-informed readers to. It is yet to be seen. Murti Rao seems to have said as below :

“After that we heard (means, after he heard Ananthapadmanabha Rao's name), the name of Vidwan Muthanna. But his books that I read are not concerned to Kannada poetry, novels or stories. I think the Kannada people would not find his works interesting.”

This was what Murti Rao was supposed to have written about Vidwan Muthanna, and it seems that he had read the latter's uninteresting books too. I doubt the existence of such a Murti Rao and even if there had been one in the distant Hyderabad, I should say that he did not know anything either about Appacha Kavi, Ananthapadmanabha Rao or Muthanna. If there had been a Murti Rao like that, he must come out now and say that he wrote every word of that defamatory article. If he is not there on the earth, the man who published that must let the cat out of the bag and show the original copy of Murti Rao's letter or his printed article.

However, I must say one thing. This kind of writing and publishing of the things by the man of the Kodagu Weekly, is a criminal practice that he followed right from 1937. Readers should here see what Murti Rao finally

says. No reviewer with decency and common sense would damn the fellow-writers with insinuating words just in order to praise an author of 'good books' whom he did not at all know personally. If Murti Rao did so, I should say that he lacked etiquette and decent manners. He said that :—

* Among the rest of the writers of Coorg, excepting he (of the Kodagu Weekly), it is very difficult to say that there are any other constant as well as earnest students of literature."

This was what the paper of the 1st February 1957 contained. After the popular Government had left, this man of Kodagu Weekly, endeavoured to court popularity with such publications. When that article appeared, I was not in Coorg for some days and only after some time I could see it.

I am asking why this man, the writer of a newspaper of two small sheets, then a forty-year old bachelor or a legally unmarried man, with "no academic qualifications as such", took to slander and defame others like Anantha-padmanabha Rao and Muthanna. Every word of that he wrote or published about them was slanderous. The learned people of Coorg must have read it thinking that all that was written there was by the one from Hyderabad. Any-way, a treacherous face has many complexions and this is one.

There are people in the world writing newspapers in the country-side, and such papers are often called yellow journals. People who produce such things remain unmarried till they look like fathers of many children and

yet flirt with women getting into their bed-rooms with an idea of trapping one of them. Such fellows also fail in politics in spite of themselves getting certified as taking interest in matters political. What nonsense of a 'political' is this ?

If one could go through the files of the Kodagu Weekly, one can say about the way how people could play dirty tricks by hiding their heads. That paper might be having somewhere between two and three thousand subscribers among whom the Kodavas are more. These Kodavas simply speak some Kannada language and other than that they read only the Kodagu Weekly, and that is all their national newspaper like the Times of India or the New York Times. For these people, the Kodagu supplied all such bogus writings periodically and that is all with what they are fed.

One can understand the mud-slinging habit of the newspapers on account of the political differences and for political campaigns. Even now many third-rate journals of the country do that. But this man of the Kodagu Weekly, a sneaky figure, did such things not only for politicians but for others also for nothing at all right from 1937, and what the gentleman who wrote to me saying that "Gupta's intentions are not pure and he seems to take pleasure in others experiencing pain", was absolutely correct. He also said that, "This mental make up of the man seems to be at the root of all his undesirable actions."

While in Madras in 1949, I had opportunities to give some radio talks, and so also in 1950. In 1957, one of the talks of mine was read at the Bangalore A. I. R. Some of my friends wrote to me that they were interested to listen

to that, and the topic was on Coorg folk songs. Therefore, I wrote to the Kodagu Weekly to publish the date and time of the broadcast so that those interested might listen to that. But the 'high thinking' man with filth in his mind, did carry his jealousy too far and to an umpteenth time, and naturally he did not feel like publishing that what I had asked him to do.

I took all this in a normal way, but I was hearing enough of such complaints from others against that paper. Therefore, I wrote to the man on the 25th December 1957 a letter reminding him about his cut-throat writing business sitting in a cellar. But that was all. I had ignored a good many of such instances, firstly because I was very busy, and, secondly, never did I take that man nor that paper as worthy to be reckoned at all.

The official editor of this journal was Pandianda Belliappa, but he was a professional politician, and he was never there. He must have thought that this man ^{who} was getting up the paper every week with contents of which only one-tenth was readable, was a trust-worthy fellow. Yes, he thought so, and so Belliappa was politicking that way and the paper of which he was the editor went on this way.

32. THE POLITICIANS AND BOOK REVIEWERS.

Apart from my other books which are not concerned to Coorg, I may state something about the biography of Gen. Cariappa, which came out in November 1964. That was my effort, from a distance without any help from any

one with regard to the collection of the source material. Gen. Cariappa himself was surprised when he came to know of this book and when the printer went to him for some photographs. He was obviously not satisfied with the work, and, therefore, wrote to me a letter mentioning some of the inaccurate statements and printing mistakes. In his letter of the 25th August 1964, he took objection on these two points as well. He said :

(i) That the general tone of the book was making serious criticism of the late Nehru, (ii) that there were quite a few parts which are absolutely irrelevant to the title of the book.

Cariappa was perfectly right when he expressed his concern on the book in these terms. I agreed with him and wrote that those objections that he pointed out were alright and said that it was better if he left them to the newspaper reviewers to judge the merits or demerits of the book. Since the book was about himself, it was obvious that he should find things in the way he said. As to the things about irrelevancies too, I explained to him point by point that most of the points were quite relevant although at one or two places, I said that I found it difficult to agree with him because like many people I too hold Nehru responsible for the mess that is our country today. As the first prime minister of the country, he could have done wonders, but, on the other hand, he played with socialism and communism on the side and tried to project his own image on the other.

Well, that apart what did the Indian newspapers say after the book came out ? Most of the leading newspapers

gave a very good review of the book. The Hindu of the 7th March 1965 said, "This is a readable volume despite some typographical errors." The Indian Express of the 14th February 1965, said that, "Interesting as this book is, it would have been more so if the author had dealt with the military achievements of Gen. Cariappa in greater detail." The Mail of Madras in its issue of the 12th June 1965, had agreed with the objections raised by the General on irrelevancies, but it said that, "The author follows the general's career closely and writes about it fondly.....The book will give the reader much background information about Indian politics after independence." The Deccan Herald of the 13th June 1965 had appreciated the book in clear terms, and said that, "The author has tried to the best of his ability to portray the general's life by quoting copiously. .. The book has certainly brought to light many points of difference between Cariappa and Nehru, which when read, will reveal not only the greatness of the former but also of his extraordinary grasp of the political and social affairs of the country." The Swarajya Journal gave a full page review of the book on the 30th January 1965, and said that, "That this biography..... will not only gratify a widely felt public curiosity but also act as an inspiration to our young men."

So goes on the reviews and opinions expressed about the book. Therefore, I did not find any reason for Gén. Cariappa to be dissatisfied with the work although he was certainly correct that he should find a few things which are not to his taste and when the book was about himself. To that extent, I too agree, and, of course, now I have made some corrections and alterations.

Apart from the above reviews, the general opinion of the readers were all encouraging. Rajagopalachari, that scholar statesman, had gone through the book and wrote in his own hand in December 1964 that, "Rajaji sends his best wishes". A leading Tamil Journal, Manjari, translated the whole book into Tamil and published that in its issue of July 1965. The Samyukta Karnataka of Bangalore of the 20th February 1965, suggested that the biography be brought into Kannada. The northern Indian papers like the Free Press Journal of Bombay mentioned about the irrelevancies and printing mistakes, but then all of them appreciated the general get up of the book and treatment of the subject matter. A friend, scholar and a professor in Andhra State, who was not known to me personally, read the book, secured my address, and wrote to me while I was in London, on the 10th December 1966, as below :

" I write this to say how deeply I appreciated your work of biography of Gen. Cariappa. It reads like a fairy tale and brings out the many astounding features of the great general."

Such letters were many, and I was convinced that the work has been of some success. I made it clear to Gen. Cariappa that I wrote the book taking the interest of the country as a whole. It is that same interest that prompted me to write one on the late Gen. Thimmayya also.

Whatever that may be, I did not find anyone in Coorg having had seen the book, let alone reading that. With a few exceptions, I found the people wholly ignorant of the book, while I was there in 1965. I found most of them very sickly in their general attitude to works like that. The

man of the Kodagu Weekly read the book sneakily and then pretended as though he had not at all known about the book. The Shakti Daily published a review of the book in its issue of the 6th February 1965.

Well, with all this, I have great pleasure to refer to the review of the biography of Cariappa, that appeared in a Kannada Weekly of Bangalore, 'Prapancha', dated the 7th March 1965. That esteemed Weekly which is now defunct, published a wonderful review which was almost an abuse, while serialising at the same time my 'History of Karnataka' continuously for nearly four years from 1962 to 1965. This Weekly should have had some journalistic ethics and decency and should have realised its obligation to a welwisher of his, who allowed him to make use of his book for serialization, and which the editor did with great gusto for nearly four long years.

This reviewer of Cariappa's biography in the 'Prapancha' was one K. Chennabasappa. He is a Kannada writer but then he is also a politician like the editor of that paper, and an ambitious politician of Subbu's type. If the editors are the active politicians like the editor of the "Prapancha", or a kind of half-baked politicians like 'G.' (I mean, Gupta), they throw away all moral obligations and ethical scruples to winds as long as they do not serve their purpose. And then again if the writers are politicians who always go after ministers, there is a danger of their losing their sense of perception as writers. Moreover, writing and politicking are a strange combination. Nehru too wrote sitting in the British jail which was almost like a circuit house, and he wrote jumbled facts, contradictory statements and inaccurate theories. A great man, active

politician, prospective prime minister, bulky books, foreign publishers, Indian admirers, and in turn a huge amount of royalty perennially pouring in, and that may not be trade but simply book writing. That's why some people ask, "Why do you write books?", and that's how I knew why people like 'G.' (I mean Gupta) write books.

Chennabasappa's review of my book on Cariappa is a master-piece of literary black-mail. That man belonged to the United Karnataka School and all such people desired to have a Karnataka state. That was alright, but Chennabasappa was not happy when I referred to the merger of Coorg to Karnataka, and he quotes these sentences from my book, and that deserves to be quoted again, as below :

"Was it not like the British annexing the same little province of Coorg in 1834 and afterwards saying that they did it in accordance with the 'unanimous wishes of the inhabitants?' .. But the history of the East India Company in 1834 was not so serious in nature when compared to the present state of affairs under the people who profess democracy.... Coorg has lost its identity under the socio-Communist dictatorship of Jawaharlal Nehru.....".

What is wrong in this ? Why should Chennabasappa weep and wail over this statement which is a historical truth, and about which another one hundred historians would join me to write the same thing ? This statement is perfectly correct. I am aware of the fact that Chennabasappa is a politician, lawyer, judge and also a friend of the ministers. All that does not help him to think that others would be frightened of his shabby writings. Perhaps,

Chennabasappa wanted to please his bosses by such abusive statements. He also quotes the below lines from my book :-

"Nehru in order to woo China and thus realise his ambition of becoming a leader of Asia, betrayed the ancient country-Tibet.....Nehru as a consummate politician has naturally to see to his own position first and that of the country next..... Nehru and Sardar Patel were in a great hurry to become the uncrowned kings of India".

Chennabasappa weeps over all these words. He never knew all this till I wrote that in the book that he reviewed. He charges me of irrelevancy because I wrote those things in that book. Chennabasappa is still mourning for his departed leaders and says that I had written all this about his dead leaders. Chennabasappa did not at all see hundreds of such books in the markets and 'gutters.' He says that I called those leaders of his as power-loving, and Chennabasappa thinks that they were saints. Chennabasappa says that I wrote like that because of some DURUDDESHA. While I appreciate Chennabasappa's pretentious SAT-UDDESHA, I cannot but say that he appears to me like a twin brother of G. (I mean, Gupta) who said that I wrote about his patrons out of DURABHIMAANA. All these people with so much of SAT-ABHIMAANA are still left in the world to shed tears for their leaders.

Chennabasappa further says that politics discussed in my book is an insult to Gen. Cariappa. That is a discovery of Chennabasappa just like his leader's discovery of India. No one, even Gen. Cariappa, told me such a thing, and no other reviewer told me so. This Chennabasappa, a

writer, a lawyer, a politician and a friend of ministers becomes a judge after writing all this. That is an important point that one should note here. He became a judge with all his politics like Subbu of yore. Then what ? Unless one worships his leaders of the day, how can any politician succeed in life ? He is still observing the mourning rites for his dead leaders, and one of the rituals is his review of my book in the 'Prapancha' of the 7th March 1965.

Chennabasappa also says to substantiate his abusive review of the book that I might have been a frustrated man, and, therefore, I wrote all that about his dead leaders and for whom he is still mourning. That is certainly correct. I am a frustrated man for one hundred reasons. I failed to become a friend of ministers and thus obtain big jobs. I failed to be under the beck and call of the power-greed politicians and thus obtain their blessings. I failed to worship the street peddlers and ministers, although I have seen people like Chennabasappa always with ministers. I wish him well as we want many such people today to make India strong ! What strong ?

I have got another reason for my frustration. I don't like the politics of Chennabasappa and his leaders. I am not happy about the Congress rule of the last twenty years. I am not happy about the things where the jungle-law still prevails and I fully agree with anyone saying that the conditions today is like "dog eating dog".

If Chennabasappa finds everything rosy as a politician and now as a judge, he is lucky, and that is his personal affair. But millions of the country are still starving and begging. Millions are still corrupt and bankrupt in their thoughts and actions. Millions are still frustrated like me

without anything before them promising. Therefore, I join those frustrated millions and those objective writers of the country's history, and those writings, I should say, cannot be erased by Chennabasappa's writings. Records are numerous to say that Chennabasappa and people like him are wrong.

Another thing that I fail to understand about Chennabasappa is that he is a writer, but how then he cast personal insinuations on a fellow-writer? I would agree with all his differences of opinion which he can rightly hold but to abuse an author of a book while reviewing his book, seems to be something wrong with the person himself who perhaps feels that his case is weak. Naturally such people have to shout, and that was why Nehru was shouting his weak cases from the citadels of the Red Fort. Anyway, psychiatrists will tell Chennabasappa who exactly is frustrated and how Chennabasappa might have been given a free copy of the book which he can throw into gutters, as he wanted it to be so, but the rest of the copies and the subsequent editions of the same would serve the purpose effectively. Anyway, one fails to understand the minds of the politicians, lawyers, judges and friends of the ministers. I think that they believe in mud-slinging and abusing others to make their weak case strong but that kind of thing would just be like the voice of the howling jackals.

However, I may tell Chennabasappa that his review in the 'Prapancha' of the 7th March 1965, was misleading, ill-conceived, venomous, malicious in character, betrayal of intolerance, lack of objectivity and an attempt at suppressing historical facts. On the whole, Chennabasappa

and G. (I mean, Gupta) are complementary to each other in their opinion, and I wonder, how many more of the type would be there, who struggle to assert themselves, their views and their out-dated ideas by way of abusing others, and desperately too. Our country is famous for many things. That's right, for many things !

33. A FAMILY ALBUM—PRINTED

This might sound like a TAMAASHA, but it is not just that. All the photographs that one could have in one's house could be printed and brought out and that could be called a pictorial biography. Some politicians in office also get such things done but at the cost of the Government.

Kotera Chinnappa who started his life as a worker in the co-operative societies and insurance agencies, ultimately rose up in his profession, as he says, by creating opportunities. Chinnappa is industrious, and I came to know him lately. I have watched his politics, I have observed his activities, I have enjoyed his hospitality and I have respected his creative energy and his enthusiasm to do something or the other.

I went through the first volume of his autobiography long back. He said that the book though printed, was not for general circulation but only for his closest relatives, friends and members of his family. But then the copies of the book reached the hands of many others. A book, after all, was printed with many pictures although those were not the coloured pictures as seen in some kinds of books.

Kotera Chinnappa gave me a copy of the second volume of his autobiography, and that was very kind of him. I don't know if it would please him if I express my opinion on that in my characteristic bluntness, especially because Chinnappa has given in it a good deal of information on topics concerning the local as well as national politics which in turn makes the readers think whether he was connected to all what he said, and if so, how !

Chinnappa's writings are, no doubt, good. But he does not seem to have told everything about him and, how far he was correct in all that he said is entirely a different matter. "You must have had your fair share of troubles and trials but you have only painted the brighter side of life", said one of his friends in a letter to him.

That was alright. While telling about himself in the book, Chinnappa also painted only those who have succeeded in life and called them his friends. Some of his insurance workers of those days and who are well off now, are also classified as his friends. But the poorer people among whom there might have been many as his friends, are totally ignored. Chinnappa spoke about a 'friend' of his in glowing terms, but the victim of his praise got so much embarrassed, and wrote to him that, "I feel that from the yearwas the best period of my life .. and afterwards I led life only for myself and my family."

Kotera Chinnappa speaks about the members of his family, and all in good taste, but unfortunately even there he was accused of being partial. For instance, he mentions about his daughters, sisters, their family etc. He gives the names of those families to which they belonged only if those families were wellknown. When he speaks of

his nephews and others too, he gives the photographs of only those who are well-placed in life and not of others. On the whole, the narrative is absolutely misleading, self-contradictory and totally biased.

Well, all this is Chinnappa's personal affair. I have nothing to do with that. But then, that gives a clue to his approach to the men and matters about which he spoke.

Chinnappa is a self-made man. Most of his life was spent as an insurance worker and officer, and his dabbling in politics was simply accidental. Instead of writing about politics, he should have written in his book, as one of his friends said, on "Insurance Salesmanship". He was the right person to write one on that subject. For over thirty years he was active in that business.

Chinnappa takes pride in saying that he was one of the prominent men to start the Kodagu Press and Kodagu Weekly in about the year 1920. His brother writes in another book (Page 74) that Chinnappa was solely responsible for starting the press. These are misleading statements. While blowing one's own trumpet, one should also blow out reliable statements. Here Chinnappa and his brother together seem to be doing another co-operative business of projecting each other's image. Both these men are trying to let down Pandianda Belliappa who was the only active Congress-man in Coorg from about 1928, but they do it sneakily sometimes acknowledging his services and very often by not mentioning his name in the right place. Writing an article in the Shakti Daily of the 15th July 1965, Chinnappa said that:

"Till 1921, there was no newspaper in Coorg."

This is wrong. There was a short-lived paper, 'Kodagu

Chandrike ' about 35 years prior to that. He also said that :—

* Therefore, many people tried hard to start the Kodagu Weekly, and Kotera Chinnappa worked as a promoter of the paper for two years and collected money."

What money ? What promoter ? Is it canvassing the newspaper subscribers ? This was like another agency along with his insurance agency. In 1920, Chinnappa was a young man of about 26, while he was given the job of enlisting the subscribers for the paper, and Pandianda Belliappa was appointed editor of the paper. Both these are paid jobs. Then where does the question of Kotera Chinnappa starting the press arise ? Where were those stalwarts of the time like Manyapanda Muthanna, Biddanda Ganapathy, Kodandera Kuttayya, and Paruvangala Kushalappa ?

Chinnappa is certainly enterprising. As a promoter of the Kodagu Weekly, he promoted his own insurance business, and, in fact, one can say that he was one of the pioneer insurance agents of Coorg. This business took Chinnappa to the nook and corner of Coorg. He might have enlisted about a thousand subscribers for the Kodagu Weekly, but he did not say anywhere in his works about the volume of his roaring insurance business under the Oriental Life Insurance Co., Ltd.

Chinnappa's motto is 'to create opportunities and to make use of them'. With the kind of work with which he was engaged, he also succeeded in becoming one of the first batch of members of the Coorg Legislative Council in 1924. That was certainly wonderful.

Then what ? Creating opportunities apart, the Congress movement was also there to afford some more opportunities and together with all that, Chinnappa's Life Assurance business went ahead in a tremendous speed. He then had a car, and he says of his generosity of offering lifts to the pedestrians.

Why does an insurance agent possess a car ? Why does he pick-up car-full of pedestrians ? That is exactly the trade, and promotion of business. Anyway, Chinnappa's industry in his business lifted him up as a full-time officer of the Company, and consequently, of course, he was out of Coorg for over 22 years.

Chinnappa retired in 1953 "with a good pension", and then became a very valuable addition to the group of amalgamationists of Coorg. He was busy going after the leaders of the merger group which was then in power. Chinnappa was a pillar of support to them, and the newspapers wrote that he spent his time gossiping with the ministers. Chinnappa flattered them as "young and resourceful" and that was his daily routine. He kept all those people of the separatist group at an arm's length. He takes a justified pride in his getting a bridge built over the Kaveri at Balamuri, and over which hardly a bullock cart passes in a day or a car once a week. But then such projects, though politically motivated, turned out to be useful in the economic and ^{social} sense of the term.

But when Chinnappa wrote saying that "what the British could not achieve in 150 years in Coorg, the popular Government achieved within five years", he was mocking at himself looking at his bridge. That was how he flattered those people to get things done. His motto was always to

create opportunities" and he did create them.

On the day when the future of Coorg was finally discussed at the Coorg Legislative Assembly in 1956, Chinnappa was one of the specially invited visitors at the gallery. The anti-merger people were then busy with their protest march outside the fort, but Chinnappa did not bother about all that. The past or the future of Coorg was not at all his concern. He did not have any definite views of anything as such. When Coorg was merged into Mysore in November 1956, Chinnappa had lost his ministers, and later up to 1959 he moved with a couple of local officials who were the last vestiges of that repressive regime. After that even those one or two also retired from service.

Now what should Chinnappa do? He was certainly an ever-energetic social worker". He hit upon creating new opportunities. From 1953 to 1959 he had no time to think about Coorg or the Kodava Samaja, because if he had done so, he would be hurting his 'friends' who were another set of opportunists. Till 1956, Chinnappa would never go near the Kodagu office or near the Kodagu Weekly, but from 1957, he began to coo his grievances through that paper. On a fine morning, Chinnappa suddenly found that Coorg was no longer separate, and therefore, began to write articles, in the Kodagu. But then he was given a fitting reply through the same paper of the 26th July 1957. That was well-written, of course.

Chinnappa joined some staunch separatists like Godanda Nanjappa who had hit upon the idea of starting a Voters' Association. As a honorary secretary of this Association, Chinnappa did a considerable good work and also began writing a series of articles. In his book,

Page 15, he wrote that :

“ The integration of Coorg with Mysore was forced on the unwilling people of Coorg by the Congress High Command... Here, the Congress not only betrayed the country but also committed a fraud on the constitution. The separation party ultimately betrayed the country in not voting against integration with Mysore. So, a great injustice was perpetrated to the people of Coorg and they have now to lose their individuality ...

But what was Chinnappa's role then ? Where was he ? Chinnappa himself was supposed to have been with his friends when they were hammering their resolution to merge Coorg into Mysore. Why does he not say all that in his autobiography ? Why should he accuse separatists for not voting against integration ? True, the anti-merger party men voted in favour of merger because they found that Coorg was too small to have self-government which would degenerate into a repressive regime. Why should they vote to give life to such a rotten regime which was already functioning in Coorg ? If Chinnappa had found such a Government good, he should have tried to retain that joining the rest of the separatists. He did'nt do that, and then to whom does he write these things now ? Well, that's that.

From 1953 to 1959, Chinnappa had not seen nor heard of the Kodava Samaja building of Mercara, that was struggling to raise its head. He says that he joined it “ as a Committee in 1959 “. One should note this date. By that time, all those haters of the Kodavas and the Kodava Samaja, who were Chinnappa's friends, were no longer in

the picture. However, Chinnappa says, that he was "subsequently elected as Vice-President (of the Samaja) and contributed Rs. 5000."

That's good and an impressive amount also. But what is the qualification of Chinnappa to show himself as a lover of the Kodava Samaja? Perhaps, his newspaper articles and payment of Rs. 5000. What else? His own sons are known by the non-Kodava names, and to justify that he says that "in social matters there is no hard and fast rule." His daughters, excepting one or two, married the non-Kodavas of different parts of India, and they did it with the willing consent of their father. So most of Chinnappa's grand-children about whom he spoke in his book, are not Kodavas. Anyway, Chinnappa's service to Coorg, as far as I see it, is that he retired and returned home without staying or spending his last days elsewhere, and helped to develop the Kodava Education Fund.

All that I said here and elsewhere, I take it as said in good humour and without offence. This does not in any way minimise my personal regards and esteem with which I hold those gentlemen about whom I speak in this work. I am only trying to give an honest estimation of men and matters that I had seen around me and of those things that had influenced me either for the best or for the worst. The great Poet said that "there is a tide in the affairs of men", and we are all small ripples in that turbulent tide which often hit each other and then settle down to calm and peace.

PART IV

NAMES

34. I EXPLAIN 'NAMES' AGAIN.

After I wrote the first article on this subject on the 15th March 1968, in the Kodagu Weekly, I was almost certain that some crows would somewhere coo against it, and it so happened. However, I ventured to write another article describing the significance of some of the Kodava names. I told that every one of those names are brought out by a pattern of distinct etymological and cultural significance. A study of that is interesting, and the article connected to that was published on the 3rd May 1968.

I started writing that all the Hindu names including those of the Kodavas, bear the imprint and impression of the names of the various gods, worshipful objects, sacred places etc. It is not like those meaningless names like Mr. Black, Mr. Wood, Mr. Fox and so on. In the whole of India, nay of Asia, the names of different groups of people carry their cultural, religious or social 'trade-mark' and that indeed gives some distinction to the people of different groups, communities, castes and creeds.

The Kodava names with a few exceptions, end with the suffixes like Appa (father), Ayya (uncle) and Anna (elder brother). These words denote that these people always looked upon their elders with respect. In fact, their family deity KARANAVA himself is the eldest member of the tribe or family, and they consider that the first man

of their family was a hero, and therefore, they foster a hero-worshipping cult. This in fact is a good tradition and one can't brush it aside so easily, and use any kind of nice words to name the children although all those words are borrowed from the texts of the Hindu mythology.

The Kodava language is mainly composed of the words from Kannada, Malayalam, Tulu, Tamil and Telugu, and, in fact, it is a mixture of the 'Pancha-Dravida' languages with a peculiar nasal accent of an interesting etymological background. I shall now deal with those compound words used for naming the people although some of these names are used by the non-Kodavas in Coorg and elsewhere. But that does not minimise the importance of the pattern of Coorg names which are theirs by tradition.

As already said, the word Appa, Ayya and Anna are used as affixes and in reversed forms to make some names like *Ayyappa, Ayyanna, Appanna, Annayya, Appayya, Thammayya* and so on.

Achappa ; Achayya :—In Malayalam ACHA means father and the same word becomes AJJA in the Kodava dialect and that means grand-father or an aged man. ACHA also means as an elderly person, and he is Vishnu who is ACHUTA or the Immortal.

Appacha :—This is only a reverse form of the word ACHAPPA, and the meaning of this is the same as above.

Ayyamma :—In Tulu, AMMA means father. The Kodavas use this name occasionally, and the name AYYAMMA means the same as Ayyappa, the name commonly used in Kerala also.

Belliappa :—BELLI means silver or white. The snow-white mountain of Kailasa is the abode of Ishwara. The

name **BELLIAPPA** is attributed to the god of Kailasa. It is also used in the sense of **BOLI** which means light, and **BOLI-APPA** means the sun-god.

Bhimayya :—**BHIMA** as everyone knows, is the Pandava hero. Here it is used to mean as a strong man, a warrior or a hero.

Biddappa ; Biddayya :—The root of the word **BIDDA** is **BILDA** or **BELDA**, the Halegannada words which mean that to grow, to prosper, to flourish etc.

Bopayya ; Bopanna :—In Telugu **BOPA** means wise or the elder. When the letter **BA** is replaced by **MA**, the word becomes **MOOPA** in the Yerava dialect and that means the same. When **BA** is changed into the same group of letters as **PA**. **BOPA** becomes **PAAPA** and usually those called by the name **Bopayya** are also called by the pet-name **Paapu** or **Paapayya**.

Chengappa :—**CHANG** means **SHANKA** or conch, and that is a musical instrument of Shiva who is also known as **Shankara** because of **SHANKA** in his hand.

Chingappa :—**CHINGARA** is the corrupt form of **SHRINGARA**, meaning decoration either with ornaments, flowers, costumes and pictures. Decorations are usually done on festive occasions to the worshipful objects, idols etc.

Chinnappa :—**CHINNA** is gold but it is also meant as nice, sweet, godly and so on. Here it is not used in the sense of **CHINNAD** or small as said in Tamil. It always means as golden, godly, beautiful etc.

Devayya :—**DEVA** means God. The **AYYA** suffix to that is self-explanatory.

Ganapathy :—The name of the son of Lord Shiva, and

this word used as a Kodava name must have been introduced during the time of the Lingayat rulers in Coorg.

Joyappa :—JOYA is the corrupt form of the word JOGA or YOGA. Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga etc are very familiar words for the students of Hindu philosophy and the derivation of this name needs no explanation.

Kalappa :—The word KAALE means a hero or a gallant man. KALA-SHARPA or a serpent is an ornament of God Shiva and it is believed that that is another reason for the use of the words Kala-appa as a name.

Kariappa :—KAARYA means Karma, service, or a duty of supreme type. This word KAARYA should not be read as KARI or black. In the olden days in Coorg, there were Karyakars or ministers of the court and temples and they were the chiefs, the Bhaktas or the devotees who also wielded considerable power and influence.

Karumbayya :—KARMA plus AYYA with the letter BA in between, becomes Karma-ba Ayya. Here Karma means Kaarya, duty, devotion etc. "Karma-ba" is also used as 'Karumbu' in Tulu for sugarcane, an article used for offerings. Kambu is its short-form and also used as a pet-name of those with the name KARUMBAYYA.

Kushalappa :—The word KUSHAL is of the Persian origin, which means happy, blessed, pleasant etc. This is an instance for the touch of the Islamic influence. Kodava words are mixed up with some Arabic or Parsian words. Refer to Page 195 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India."

Kuttappa; Kuttayya : KUTTA is another form of the word KITTA which is a corrupt form of KRISHNA. Therefore, this indigenous word KUTTA has its direct origin from the name of god Krishna Himself.

Machayya :—In Tamil MAACH means 'another birth', and that in turn means CHIRANJIVI or immortal or deathless. That is a nice derivative for a name.

Madappa Madayya :—MAADA is a short form of the word MADHAVA or Vishnu. Instead of the one being called Madhava in the Kodava dialect, the usual change of the word into Mada-appa and Mada-ayya took place.

Mandappa; Mandanna :—The word MAND means temple, the place of worship, a temple courtyard etc. The chief of a MAND is a BHAKTA or the chief priest, and he is known as Mand-appa and Mand-anna.

Medappa :—MEDA is the corrupt form of MEDHAS and MEDHAVI which means wise, intelligent, learned etc. MEDHA also means YAAGA or sacrifice like the ASHWAMEDHA YAAGA, and the chief priest here is Meda-appa.

Monnappa; Monnayya :—MONNA means short or dwarfish. The first great dwarf was Vamaṇa, the three-footer Tri-Vikrama or Vishnu. The Kodavas, no doubt, are the worshippers of the original man and this is an instance for their being called so.

Muddappa :—MUDDU means the beloved, dear, darling etc.

Muthanna :—MUTHU in Kannada and Tamil means the pearl but here it also means as lovely or beautiful. In Malayalam the word MOOTHA means elder or wiser and there are names like Moothanna, but here the name is used in the sense Muthu-anna.

Nachappa :—NAACH means to dance, to act or to play. The greatest dancer of the Universe is Nataraja or Ishwara, the god of dance.

Nanayya:—NAANA is the short form of Narayana. There are names like Naranappa, Naranayya etc. but the Kodavas condensed the word further and brought it to just what is called Nana-ayya.

Nanjappa; Nanjunda:—NANJ means poison and the one who ate or UNDA or drank that poison was Nilakanta or Ishwara, who is also Nanj-appa.

Ponnappa:—PONN is gold or fine. In Kannada it is known as HONNU and there are names like Honnappa, but here it is rightly said as Ponnappa.

Poonacha:—POONA is the corrupt form of the word POORNA. OM POORNAMIDHAM is a part of a hymn addressed to the God—the All-pervading. The meaning of the word ACHA is already been said behind.

Poovayya:—POOV is flower, the most delicate, beautiful, sanctified and sacrificial thing, and a symbol of worship and honour all over.

Pemmayya:—PEMMA is the corrupt form of the word PERMA or PERME which means proud, heroic, honourable, divine and so on.

Somayya:—SOMA is Nandi or Bull. NANDI-VAHANA is Ishwara. SOMA also means the moon and CHANDRA-SEKHARA is again Ishwara.

Subbayya:—SUBBA is the short form of Subramanya, the name of the son of Ishwara. Subraya, Subbannaya etc. are the other forms but among the Kodavas, Subbayya is the only accepted form.

Thimmayya:—THIMMA is Vishnu. Tirupati Timmappa is known as God Narayana who is worshipped at Tirupathi and elsewhere by the Vaishnavaites.

Uthappa; Uthayya:—The word UTH means height,

wise, progress etc. UTHISHTA, UTHKRISHTA, and UTHAMA are some of the Sanskrit words which are used for things extraordinary. God is Sarvothama or Purushothama or of course Uth-appa.

A pattern of names of a small community like this is, no doubt, a symbol of recognition of a people anywhere if a few among them are in the forefront of public life of the country, and that is how the Kodavas are now known. A certain Indian officer working in a foreign embassy as a chief executive and who hailed from Kashmir, once surprised me when he knew my name, asking "Are you from Coorg?" "How did you know that?" I shot back. He said that he knew some familiar Coorg names. I was immensely pleased, and that was more so when I knew that no Kodava by the name Muthanna had reached an All India eminence so that a man of Kashmir would have found it as a familiar Coorg name.

While I was getting myself admitted into the Madras Law College, I was standing in a queue, and when my turn came, the Principal asked me my name. As he heard my name, he at once shot back, "Are you from Coorg?" "Yes, Sir." I said. "Sit down," he told me and that was a rare honour for me just because I had a Kodava name. None of the other boys were asked to 'sit down'. Well, I need not elaborate.

Kariappa and Thimmayya are the two names that are known all over the country, and the people know that they are the Kodava names because of the two esteemed generals of Coorg. Now there are some others with the same name going round, one as a Sepoy, one as a merchant, the other as a lumberman, and another as an agent of some-

thing and yet another as a crook and another as a cheat and so on. These men outside Coog exploit the name and fame of those two, and get benefited in a hundred ways because the people outside Coorg apt to think that all these are related or connected to those two famous names. But those benefited fellows would not admit the initial advantage they derive and on the other hand, they try to show up and then try to even put down those elders, their name sakes. Of course, that is sheer ingratitude, and I have seen a good number of such people also.

However, these Kodava names are repeatedly used and they are passed on from grand-fathers to grand-sons, and thus a sort of community spirit was maintained. The women are known by the commonly used names such as *Ponnamma*, *Thangamma*, *Muthamma*, *Gangamma*, *Nanjamma*, *Bollamma*, *Chinnamma*, *Poovamma*, *Gowramma*, *Kalamma*, *Chondamma*, *Bojjamma*, *Mayamma*, *Dechamma*, *Machamma*, *Seethamma*, *Neelamma*, *Subbamma*, *Muddamma*, *Akkamma*, *Somavva*, *Thayavva*, *Cheeyavva*, *Kamavva*, *Ammavva*, *Ummavva* and so on. But now the pity is that women too are clamouring to pick up all kinds of words for their names, and thus instead of leading the men-folk in maintaining and observing the sanctity of the cultural traditions, rejoice over themselves being the cause for bringing these traditional names, costumes, rituals etc. into disrepute and to a disgraceful and disastrous end. This is not progress. It is just a crude mentality of barbaric tendency working in the back of their mind.

35. ONE MORE WORD ABOUT 'NAMES'.

In the Kodagu Weekly of the 24th May 1968, I wrote another article on the same subject, and I am just giving here the gist of that fairly long note.

It has its own importance and significance when one selects a name for a child. Our ancestors were performing elaborate ceremonies and rituals on such occasions although things would easily conclude these days with just a lunch served to the few assembled guests.

Most of the people in our country are still orthodox, and this orthodoxy in habits does not mean lack of progress. It is a way of life that enhances refinement and enlightenment. Observance of rituals does purify one's mind and many great men of science, religion, politics etc are certainly orthodox. It is only the ill-informed and the ultra-modern upstarts generally violate the ancient and yet sensible codes of behaviour.

People should now think that because this is a Sputnik Age, there is all the more danger in their going astray with wrong impressions and notions about the ethical and spiritual values of life. That is exactly the confusion due to the lack of understanding of the things. About 90 percent of our people in the country live in their own dwellings and surroundings as tillers, farmers or labourers and they are not bothered about anything but a decent and respectable living. Rockets and sputniks have nothing to do with them, and they don't call all that progress even though they might wonder at the human achievement and scientific development. The common people believe in God, they perform rituals without knowing why they are doing it, and they lead a simple life without bothering to know

about the fantastic progress of science. They yearn only for contentment and good life, and as such they are, in a sense, the custodians of our religion and culture, and all the rest, go astray as perverses interpreting culture wrongly and misleading people obstinately.

When I say all this, one should not take me to be a communalist in the political sense of the term. We have committed to a community life and it is futile to think that all the people of the Hindu religion would become one because the caste differences have been rooted so deep in the lives of the people. Therefore, as long as a situation such as this exists, one should abide by the community discipline, and that should not be taken as narrow-mindedness. Instead of a few odd individuals posing themselves as orthodox, if the whole community thinks and acts that way, it would be wonderful, and that would be the communal solidarity and that is what is found lacking everywhere.

Look at the Muslims. They are a race who create their own kingdoms by sheer strength of their unity. Among the Hindus, such a thing as unity is impossible as long as they divide themselves beginning from the family-level to the national level. Some strong groups of people like the Sikhs, the Nagas and others fight for their recognition in the national level by their unity as well as community strength. The Sikhs are a proud race and they follow their traditions with great pride. If one fails to add the suffix 'Singh' with his name, he would at once be disgraced and excommunicated from their fold, and that ancient discipline must be imposed if at all the social and ethical values of life should sustain,

As it is, India is worn out with bickerings over caste, community, language and so on, and there is no possibility of achieving national integration in the India level in spite of the politicians speaking about that to deceive people. The Hindu religion is weakened during the centuries mainly due to the caste differences and that was conveniently exploited by the Christian missionaries and the Muslim fanatics. When the poorer and the backward people were converted to Christianity, the first thing they did was to give those converts the Christian names like John, Joseph, Lobo, Pinto, D'Souza, Thomas and so on. This consciousness of new names they had upon being converted naturally induced all those people to shift their loyalty to the religion they had embraced.

Similarly in the medieval times, millions of Hindus were forcibly converted to the Islam, and the only thing they had to do then was to name all those converts as Muhammad, Hussein, Abdullah, Rahmaan, Ghafur etc, and the Hindu women on conversion became Begums. With the names of this sort and with the better status they acquired in a new religion, those converts saw promising hopes and prospects. Therefore, in that way the names have a magic effect on people and they do count for much in many ways, and we should never minimise the importance of the names, either of persons or of places.

With ten million Christians and a hundred million Muslims in India today, it is clear that the Hindu religion is shaken in its foundation. Among many causes for such a state of affairs, the outstanding one was the names of persons which afford a quick and magic influence to cut at the very root of the religion of the birth of all those

millions.

Therefore, what I am saying is that as long as we wish to retain social solidarity and cultural entity, we must honestly endeavour to see that the important and much respected features of our way of life is strictly followed and moral and social codes of discipline imposed. It is true that the modern conditions are fast transforming things and "the old order changeth" and all that the elders had believed as good and sensible, are deliberately violated. If the rituals, some customs, and even a pattern of names are all gone, what will be the man then? After all, it is only the one or two per cent of the world's population go about in search of hopes, enterprise and adventure while all the rest should live and die where they are. There is no reason why the millions of common men should try to ignore the traditional ways of life when most of them are ethically sensible and socially colourful.

What the Kodava children with the modern names like Prakasha, Girisha, etc miss is that colour and glamour of the life of the ancestors. When they reach their sixty or seventy years of age, who would care to address them with respectful terms adding ANNA or AJJA with their names? By that time, it can be guessed, the whole ethical sense and affectionate link of relationship between the oldsters and youngsters would disappear and man would almost revert to barbarism although he might live in a terribly civilised world, and that "civilization" would be merely the progress of science, simply science and mechanics.

Scientific development is not civilization, high academic qualification or achievement by itself is not culture

and personal careerism on selfish pursuits is not progress, if the man concerned fails to understand the spiritual significance of the modern civilization and of the ancient cultural traditions. An irreligious millionaire would just be a drag and a highly educated man a hoax, if their ways of life are not influenced by the codes of religious and moral conduct. It is such essential requisites that are missing today in the individuals who seem to be running amuck without knowing the true values of life.

It is in this spirit we have to evaluate our thoughts and actions. What are we as individuals contributing to the society and community? If one thinks that selfishness alone is the be-all and end-all of existence, and, that one has no responsibility towards the society, it is then he becomes a part and parcel of moral despair and social disorder.

I am sure that my words will go unheeded by my fellow-citizens but I have my own strong faith in the words to which I give expression so that someone might hear me some time. I speak to a small community. I don't care, however, if some odd individuals who day in and day out deceive not only others but also their own conscience, and, consequently belittle all that one might say.

The Kodavas were found to be "a distinct people" by those Europeans of those days, and they included Robert Taylor (1790), Capt Mahoney (1798), Lieut. Gonnor (1817), Col. Fraser (1834), Mark Cubbon (1858), Robert Cole (1865), Lewin Bowring (1869), George Riechtor (1872), Henry Cobb (1916), Hilton Brown (1920) and many others. It was the reports that were given by these men helped this small community to come up, and the Kodavas should ever be grateful to those lovers and admirers of a native culture

such as this:

The true lovers of culture among the Indians are very few, and sincere nationalists are just a few. Sometimes people donate big sums of money for causes about which they themselves are not clear. In Coorg many have done that, but the money paid like that has failed to deliver the goods. What is required is more of heart and mind rather than the money which people give just on the maxim, "Vanity first, charity next". There, one could see one's waste of money than that of any service emerging out of it.

People talk from pinnacles and citadels to deceive people; some might write about classics and culture to trade in them: most of the others grin and win people to cheat them, and a good lot of the 'civilised' people would talk politics and theology through their heads, and all such people gather riches with neither shame nor conscience. This has been the world all along, and finally where will it end with those who are enamoured of this 'progress' of science and with their dreams of the so-called 'civilization'? Well, less it's said the better.

36. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (i)

Individuals make a nation and consequently they make history. In the history of Coorg the exploits of the Kodavas stand prominent for all times. They always fought for their country first and for their masters next. That heroic tradition is no more now and a rank degradation has set in all over. In the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India", an effort has been made to give a comprehensive account of the history of Kodagu from the ancient

past, and the first 150 pages of that closely printed book is the only one that has brought the Coorg history exhaustively and up to date till 1952, and, here in this work the same thing is being continued but in a different angle, and, of course, in a critical way.

Well, now I venture to give an account of some prominent Kodavas who were responsible in one way or the other to add to the glorious traditions of this small race. Some among them are great personalities, some are great administrators, some great warriors and so on. But there are also some crooks among them who, nevertheless, need to be mentioned.

As I give out the names one by one, readers would please note that I do it in the alphabetical order, and this chapter is divided into some more parts in order to do justice to the names of as many prominent personalities of this small race as possible. I may also add that I have picked up very few of the living men^{and} women because it would be too early to evaluate their life with their job unfinished. Among the dead, I may say that some names might have been left out by over-sight or for want of information about them. Nevertheless, I should like to say that I have tried to do justice to all the names that deserved mention in this short list of the significant names of the Kodavas. Here I begin to state about those men and women whose names begin with the letter 'A':—

Achayya Appaneravanda:—Hyder Ali had carried the young prince of Coorg, Viraraja the Elder and his family, away to the Gorur Fort and imprisoned them there. Later Tipu Sultan transferred them to the Peryapatna Fort. At that time the Kodavas were fighting against the

Muslim infiltration into Coorg and they did not mind a Lingayat chief ruling over them rather than the Muslims. Achayya was one of the twelve brave men who marched in disguise to Peryapatna and got the Raja and his family released and then reinstated them to their position. Under Achayya's command, Coorg army was mobilised and Tipu's men and his governor Nagappayya were driven out of Coorg. This was between the years 1785 and 1788, about 185 years back. (Refer to Page 37 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Achayya Kattemane (Achu Nayak):—He was the son of Kattemane Chittyappa Nayak of Anjigerinad in South Coorg where some stone relics and figures are still found. When Chittyappa was fighting with the Peryapatna chiefs, his infant son Achu was rescued from the ruins of a deserted house by a woman who fled with the baby to Peryapatna. The child was brought up by the Nanjunda Raja of Peryapatna, and after he grew up to be a warrior he was made a commander of the army. Later Achu returned to his father's dominion in Kiggatnad and killed his rival Nayaks. He was also not in favour of the Lingayat Raja Doddavirappa of Coorg. That was the time when Kote Viravarma of Malabar was interfering in the Coorg affairs, and Achu Nayak proved to be a terror to all those chiefs. This was in about the year 1730,—about 240 years back. (Refer to pages 26, 29 and 34 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India".)

Achayya Ketolira:—He was also known as Achanna. When the English army marched to Srirangapatna through Coorg in January 1799, the Raja collected a huge quantity of rice, thousands of bullocks, sheep etc and supplied to

the British. He had done it once before in 1792, but this time the total amount of his supply exceeded 40,000 butties of rice, 3500 bullocks, 2500 sheep, many elephants, men for service etc etc, while the English army had encamped at Watekolli, Virarajpet, Siddapur and Gaddige. The man who organised the entire collection business was Subedar Ketolira Achanna who did a splendid service. He tapped that granary of Coorg, Kiggatnad, from where he collected a greater quantity of rice, oxen etc. The total value of the entire supply was about Rs. four lakhs, and the Raja supplied all that free of charge. He refused to be compensated for that and all this brought him closer to the English Government.

Achayya Palekanda —He was one of the early batches of the School Endowment scholars, who after doing his matriculation, proceeded to the Imperial Forest College, Dehra Dun, in the year 1881. It can be said that Achayya was one of the first to get into the Forest Service as a qualified officer among the Kodavas. That was about 90 years back.

Aianna Palekanda :—He belonged to the very first batch of middle-school educated Kodavas of the time. He was appointed as a teacher of the Anglo-Vernacular School of Virarajpet in 1869, and, shortly after, he became the headmaster of the school in 1870. Aianna was appointed later as the Deputy Inspector of Vernacular Schools in 1872 when there were 27 schools and 1600 students and it could be said that he was the first Government employee among the Kodavas in the Education department with some position and authority, i. e., about 98 years back.

Aiappa Apparanda Lt.-Gen. :—After his education in

England in 1933, Aiappa joined the Military Academy in Dehra Dun in 1935, and then became an officer in the Army Signal Corps. When the war began in 1939, Aiappa was in Malaya where he was captured by the Japanese, and after being released, he joined the National Defence Academy. He was the Commander of the Divisional Signal Regiment, and as the Chief Signal Officer, Western Command, he became a Brigadier. In 1950, he visited Canada and United States in the Commonwealth Staff and Commanding Officers' course. In 1960 he was the honorary A. D. C. to the Union President as well as the Director of Signals in the rank of Major-General. Aiappa retired as a Lieut.-General in 1966, and later took up service as Managing Director of Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bangalore. In January 1969, the Union Government honoured him with the Vishista Sevaa Medal for "exceptional services." Aiappa was the first Indian to become the chief of the Signal Corps and was the third Kodava officer to rise to the position of a general in the Army of free India. (Refer to Page 274, "A Tiny Model State.")

Aiappa Boverianda:—In 1836-37, the non-Kodava elements of Coorg and South Kanara joined together and organised a revolt against the British Government in Coorg under the leadership of a couple of pretenders to the throne of the exiled Raja. But the Kodavas mustered all their force and rose up as one man and quelled the rebellion under the leadership of Capt. Le Hardy, the Superintendent of Coorg, and Dewan Apparanda Bopanna. Aiappa was one of the Nad parpathigars who led his men and marched to Puttur along with Kolera (or Kotera ?) Achayya and many others. This was in 1837, that is, 133

years back.

Aiappa Kadumanda Dr. :—An agricultural graduate of Madras University, Aiappa served in the Agriculture department of Coorg Government. In 1946, he left for United States of America for higher studies and after a five-year study he produced a valuable thesis on his subject, Horticulture, and returned to Coorg in 1951. Dr. Aiappa is now one of the chief technical officers in Karnataka. The Chethalli Research Centre, the Gonikoppa Orange Research Farm and some other agricultural projects in Coorg are mainly due to his industry and enthusiasm.

Aiappa Koluvanda :—A noted coffee planter, and philanthropist of the last century, Aiappa soon became a broke during the depression of the eighteen-nineties. A Government record said of him that, "though once rich, now a ruined man" and that was in 1898, i.e. 70 years back. One of his many contributions to the public was the CHAULTRY at Virajpet, built for the benefit of the pilgrims going to Bhagamandala every year.

Aiappa Mukkatira :—A noted coffee planter, public worker and philanthropist, Aiappa was one of the pioneers of the cooperative movement in Coorg. Among his many commendable items of public work, the monumental one is the Clock Tower in Virarajpet, built in 1911, i.e. 59 years back. (It is well-worth celebrating its Diamond Jubilee in 1971.) The British Government conferred the title of Rao Bahadur to Aiappa in 1915, and the SANNAD was presented to him at his house as he was then sick.

Akkamma Konganda Dr. (Miss) :—She was the first M.B. & B.S. graduate among the Kodavas having quali-

fied in 1926, i.e. 45 years back. She served in various places of the former Mysore State, and died in Bangalore in 1954 while she was still in service at the Vanivilasa Hospital. She remained a spinster.

Appacha Appaneravanda :—Poet, dramatist, singer, actor and a great scholar, Appacha was born in 1868 and died in 1944. He was the first dramatist and poet in the Kodava dialect and author of four published and some unpublished dramas and songs. A memorial fund was instituted in his honour and schemes were undertaken to perpetuate his memory. His dramatic works are translated into Kannada, and his birth centenary was celebrated in a grand scale in 1968, and funds were collected to reprint his works and to foster art and culture in Coorg. (Refer to "A Tiny Model State" Page 194, a booklet, "Thus Sang Appacha Kavi," published in 1968, and also his translated works with his autobiography that is given in the Kannada version of the Kaveri Nataka.)

Appacha Mathanda :—He was a hero of the Coorg wars of 1834, and he held the northern column of the English army that was commanded by Col. Waugh at bay, and gave a tough fight to the enemy when a number of men died including a few English officers. Appacha was a very loyal and gallant soldier. He again took a leading part to quell the mutiny of the non-Kodavas in 1837, and he was amply rewarded for his services. (Refer to Pages 65 and 99 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Appachanna Mathanda :—This junior Appacha must have been either the son or the grandson of the elder Appacha, mentioned above. Appachanna was the head Sherestedar in the eighteen-sixties, and he worked in the

best traditions of his family. Both L. Bowring and Robert Cole testified to his services in glowing terms saying that he deserved "honourable mention of his services", and as "very diligent, and looked up to as the headman of his race." Appachanna's influence on the Commissioner of Mysore & Coorg, Sir Mark Cubbon, was such that he caused a Kodava contingent sent to Peryapatna to guard the frontiers during the mutiny of 1857. Appachanna along with Rev. Richtor and Koluvanda Kariappa, was a leading man to initiate the project of the Central School buildings and the Hostel buildings in Mercara, and the movement of English Education in Coorg. He was also one of the founders of the School Endowment Fund. Appachanna retired from service with a liberal grant of pension for life and also with full pay, in 1872 i.e. 96 years back.

Appanna Ajjkuttira :—A lawyer by profession, Appanna took to politics as a Congress party-man and got elected to the Mysore State Assembly in 1962. He was re-elected in 1967 general elections, and consequently became a deputy Minister for Industries of the Government of Mysore. He has shown considerable skill and ability both as a politician and as an administrator.

Appanna Chowrira :—After the death of Viraraja the Elder, his minor daughter Devammaji, on the basis of his will, was enthroned as the ruler. The late Raja's brother Linga Raja had by then manouvred to become a guardian of the young Devammaji, but his claim to the throne was ignored by the Coorg chiefs at a public meeting held at Mercara, and also by the British Resident in Coorg of the time. Depressed and dejected, Linga Raja

set out on his mule to his Haleri residence, when on the way at Mahadevapet, Appanna, the chief royal counsellor, met him and asked him why he was so much put down. After hearing Linga Raja, Appanna took him back to the Fort and convinced the Coorg chiefs of Linga Raja's claim to the throne according to the Hindu tradition. As a result of this new arrangement, Linga Raja got himself installed on the throne in 1811, exactly 160 years back. Thus Appanna's (who was also called a Dewan by his admirers) plan succeeded, but he seemed to have taken advantage of this new Raja without realising that that Raja was just an uneducated and ill-informed brute without any character whatsoever. Linga Raja was a cruel man and he could not tolerate Appanna taking liberty in his presence and on state matters. Once on a certain point, the Raja and his minister crossed, and Appanna, true to his spirit, refused to be cowed down. Enraged by this, the Raja ordered that Appanna, his close associates and some of the members of the Chowrira family, were all nailed at the nearby jungle, 'Sidi-kaad' on the way to Galibeedu village. The victims died there after a savage suffering for about twelve days and with curses on their lips. This incident was the blackest chapter of the Coorg history, and Linga Raja was, no doubt, a brute incarnate as well as a usurper of the throne. (Some say Linga Raja wrote some books. It is not true. There were other learned commoners with the name Linga Raja and who were educated in classics. The 'Sists' that were written in his time were done so by the direction of Lieut. Connor, the first surveyor of Coorg, of that time. Anyway this Linga Raja was a tyrant and uneducated fellow even according

to the then standard.) Appanna, a brave statesman, thus became a victim of an ungrateful wretch. He had realised the folly that he had committed by enthroning such a man, but then it was too late. (Refer to Page 55 to 58 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

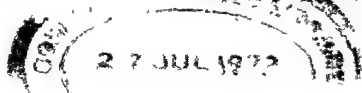
37. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (ii)

Appayya Chendrimada :—Here was a brilliant young man from Coorg who had obtained a series of distinctions during his academic career not only in Coorg but in the whole of South India. Appayya's academic achievements are well-worth to be written in the letters of gold. He was one of the first eight students of the Central High School to appear for the matriculation examination in 1881. Till then the Coorg students used to go to Bangalore to appear for the same. Out of 1331 candidates appeared for the matriculation in the whole of the Madras presidency that year, he came first and that was an enviable record, indeed. After that his orthodox and superstitious parents did not want their brilliant son to continue his studies in a far off place, probably Madras. But then the School Inspector E. Marsden, convinced his parents on the necessity of his being sent for higher studies, and, accordingly, Appayya was admitted into the Madras Christian College. In his F. A. examination in 1883, he obtained a first class, and his rank was 34 out of 361 students who appeared for the same in Madras University. In his B. A. degree examination in 1885, Appayya passed first in English language & literature and Physics, and he fetched the Ripon Gold Medal and other awards for having stood first

in the whole University. The Principal and Professors spoke in glowing terms about him in their reports and on his consistently good performance. Appayya's was thus a proud and brilliant record for all times. He was for some time an assistant teacher at Mercara in 1888, probably the first Kodava graduate teacher in Coorg (though not trained). He later left for the Imperial Forest College, Dehra Dun, and that was exactly 80 years back. Incidentally I may add that no name among the Kodavas gave me such a pleasure to record than that of this extraordinarily talented son of Coorg.

Appayya Chettolira:—He was one of the Subedars in 1837 when he led a contingent of Kodava soldiers towards Puttur to suppress the rebellion of the non-Kodavas. His men encamped at Chembu where they had some skirmishes against the enemy and then with the men of Parpathigar Chottemada Appayya and others, proceeded ahead and gave a good fight to the pretenders who were routed in different directions. This was 133 years back.

Appayya Iychettira:—Muddu Raja of Haleri family and Muddaya of the Horamale family, were cousins, and they ruled Coorg together from 1766 to 1770. Appayya was a brave and a loyal soldier of the time and that roused the envy of his opponents who carried prejudicial reports against him to the Rajas. As was the custom in those days, Appayya was made to go through an ordeal of proving his loyalty by dipping his hand into the boiled ghee in a big vessel and picking out a gold ring from that. Appayya stood undaunted, and prayed for goddess Bhagavathi. He made an oath that if he is proved not guilty, he would conduct an annual festival of goddess Ponnappa at his family



house in Mythadi village every year. Appayya came out of the test successfully and was later appointed a Dewan in charge of land revenue, and his Dewanship was conferred by the Rajas' own seal. Eventually, he started the Pudyodi festival which is being held every year since exactly 200 years. This is certainly a good record.

Appayya Kayendira.:—Born as a poor man at Arapattu village, Appayya was a great warrior of his time, who even attacked and then defeated his contemporary Kullachanda Chondu, another brave fighter. Appayya's exploits were manifold and he is remembered even now by his villagers during the annual festivals. He is also a historical figure around whom some legends and ballads are in circulation.

Appayya Konganda.:—He was a judicial Sherestedar in the eighteen-sixties and such jobs which rendered both power and influence, were considered as very high in those days. Appayya was a leading figure in the founding of the Kodava Education Fund, in the building of the Central School etc. He was also one of the advisers to the British to afford services of the Kodavas to guard the frontiers during the mutiny of 1857. Rev. Richtor, and Robert Cole spoke very highly of Appayya and called him a headman of the race. He, along with Mathanda Appachanna and Koluvanda Kariappa formed a very influential trio in the Coorg affairs of the time.

Appayya Koravanda Dr..:—A bright student of the Central School, Appayya was one of the first to become a medical graduate, L. M. & S., of Madras University in 1878, i. e. 90 years back, and was also a winner of the Hobert prize in 1882. He set up private practice in Mercara and it could be said that he was the first in Coorg to open a pri-

vate dispensary. Later Appayya joined the Government service and worked in Virarajpet for some time in 1883. He, however, took the Mysore Government service and became a leading surgeon at the Bowring hospital, Bangalore. Dr. Appayya is wellknown as a scholar and nationalist and as an author of a few small books. His effort to explore and introduce a script to the Kodava dialect was commendable. By his thorough research into the Kodava characteristics, he always held and with authority too, that the Kodavas were Kshatriyas. (Refer to pages 187 & 306 of 'A Tiny Model State of S. India.')

Appayya Polladevi :—Information concerning Appayya's life, is not available excepting those given in the folk songs and tales that are being sung about him. He was born in Chembebelyur village of Yedenalknad in about the latter part of the sixteenth century. Having been born by the grace of the lord of Bythur, Appayya is credited with many heroic as well as miraculous deeds. The 'Pattole Palame' gives an interesting and a fairly lengthy ballad about him describing his exploits.

Aypanna Mukkatira :—He hailed from Bilugunda Village, Ammathi-Nad. Once Lingaraja II was returning from his wife's Palanganda house near Murnad, and on the way he saw a smart handsome boy who was also good in hunting, riding, swimming etc. After testing Aypanna in many a heroic feat, the Raja decided to give him his daughter Muddammaji in marriage, and in a few days in 1816, the marriage was conducted, and Aypanna became a Lingayat with the name Chennabasappa. The Appangala property of 3000 butties of Jama and Jaghir lands and jungle were given to them. Muddammaji, however died

after two years. The Raja's wife, a daughter of Palanganda Appanna, suggested to him that their second daughter Devamma be married to Aypanna in order to maintain the royal kinship. The Raja agreed and the wedding was conducted in 1819, i.e. exactly 150 years back. Lingaraja died in 1820 and his wife Devamma also died with him. After that the rivalry between Viraraja the Younger and Aypanna began with the mischievous Kunta Basava doing the rest of the evil things. That finally led to disastrous consequences with the deposition of the Raja, suicide of Kunta Basava, the coming of the British with the army, and so on. Chennabasappa or Aypanna, and his wife Devammaji, who had fled to Bangalore charging the Raja with atrocities and murder, returned to live in their Appangala house. This man, however, was an important character of the tragic drama of those days in 1834, that led to the annexation of Coorg. He died in 1868 and Devammaji in 1900. (Refer to Page 62, and Chapter 8, of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Belliappa Appaneravanda:—He was one of the Nad parpathigars in 1836, i.e. 134 years back. He led a considerable number of men down the Ghats and marched towards Puttur to put down the pretenders and other non-Kodava elements who were struggling to get back to Coorg and restore some of their stooges to power. Belliappa's role as a fighter was commendable.

Belliappa Ballachanda:—A graduate of nineteen twenties, Belliappa started his career with a badge of a nationalist but soon became frustrated one at that. He had his own printing press with a weekly newspaper called 'Loka-Pavana' since 1925. This paper was later christened

as 'Janma Bhumi' and its only mission was to advocate merger of Coorg in order to play down his political opponents. Belliappa had no political ideas of his own. When the men of the merger party wanted to retain Coorg as a separate state after they got power in 1952, Belliappa supported their stand also whole-heartedly. He continued his paper even after Coorg was merged in 1956, defending some of his 'friends' who were still left out here and there as last vestiges, and then sold his press in 1960. He died in 1964.

Belliappa, M. (?):—He was a Munsiff magistrate in 1885, i.e. 85 years back, the first Kodava to be elevated to the post. I am not clear about his family name. In some records, it is said as M. Belliappa, and then he must have belonged to Manyapanda, Mandepanda, or some such families. Belliappa later became one of the 2nd assistant commissioners, and it is important to note about him that he officiated as district magistrate for a short time in 1895 in the absence of Mr. Brook Legath who was on leave. Belliappa died while he was still in service, in the year 1896.

Belliappa Pandianda:—The Editor of the Kodagu Weekly from 1921 to 1963 for 42 years, a member of the Coorg legislative council and later of the legislative assembly from 1924 to 1957 for 33 years, President of the Provincial Cooperative Bank, Marketing Federation etc., for over 25 years and for some time the President of the Coorg District Board, Belliappa was an ardent public worker as well as Congress-man. He afforded life and blood to the Congress movement in Coorg and was one of the first to court arrest during the Indian freedom movement. It was his drive and enthusiasm that brought Mahatma

Gandhi to Coorg in 1933 i.e., 37 years back, during the latter's Southern Indian tour. Belliappa was also a leading spokesman of the anti-merger party of Coorg from 1932 to 1956. He retired from public life in 1963 and died in Mercara in 1966. (Refer to the Chapters 14 to 17 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Belliappa Pattacheravana:—(Boluka) Among the Kodavas, the name Boluka, is an unusual type and that must have been a pet name of the one called Belliappa. Boluka was an associate of Appaneravanda Achayya, who with twelve others got the Coorg princes released from the Peryapatna fort, and later drove out the Muslims from Coorg during the time of Tipu Sultan, and that was in 1787-89. (Refer to Page 30 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Belliappa Pemmanda:—Son of Monnappa, the ex-Inspector-General of Police, Belliappa is in service as district officer in the state of Tamil Nadu. A young Indian Administrative Service officer, he has better days ahead.

Bhimayya Paruvangada:—He was one of the early batches of the School Endowment Fund scholars, who passed with distinction in the matriculation, F.A., and other University examinations as a student of the Madras Christian College, in 1884-87. He has also won many academic awards.

Bollamma M. (?):—She was the daughter of Belliappa whose name was mentioned above and whose family name is not clear to me from records. Bollamma was the first girl in Coorg to pass out of the middle school successfully in 1885, i.e. 85 years back, and that was a landmark of woman's education in Coorg.

Bopanna Apparanda:—One of the four Dewans of the time of the last Raja of Coorg, Dewan Bopu, as he wa

fondly called, played a historic role during his time in office. He was anti-Lingayat by temperament and a staunch and spirited Kodava. He was mainly responsible to influence the Raja to surrender to the British, and then himself went to Kushalnagar to welcome the British into Coorg. Dewan Bopu's services during the Kanara rebellion of 1836-37, was extraordinary. He led the Kodava troops to Sulya and Puttur, and again commanded a 1000-man expedition separately and put down the mutiny of the imposters. He served as a right-hand man of Capt. Le Hardy, the Superintendent of Coorg, and gallantly defended not only Coorg but also saved the Kodava race from the non-Kodava elements who had all joined together under the leadership of another Dewan, Laxminarayya, who was arrested later on for his treacherous role. Bopu's men showed themselves as experts in Guerilla war fare and they collected a booty of nearly Rs. 35,000. The British offered a very generous reward to the Kodavas who took part in suppressing the mutiny. But they in one voice refused to take any reward and said that, "We Kodavas do not require pay because it is our duty which we owe to our 'country' to secure our tranquillity." In a separate letter to the Collector Lewin of Mangalore, Dewan Bopu wrote refusing to accept the reward stating that, "It is a matter of regret with me to accept the present because we did not offer our services with the desire of obtaining money, but simply from a desire to elevate the name of our 'country'—Coorg". This is a fine example for a pure, selfless and spirited services of the ancestors, and Apparanda Bopanna's history makes an enjoyable reading. He was certainly a genuine personality of the Coorg history. (Refer

to Page 66 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

38. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (iii)

Bopayya Biddanda:—He was called Syr-Karyakar Bopu. He was a loyal servant of Coorg during the time of Viraraja the Elder and served under him for 19 years. He was of support to the Raja and did yeoman's service to keep the Muslim influence off during the time of Tipu Sultan. Immediately after the fall of Tipu in 1799, the Raja sent Bopayya to Tulnad, and the latter led a huge army that swept the entire coastal territories and occupied the vast area. The Kodavas went up to Kodyal (Mangalore)—quelled the Mapillas of Kumbala, occupied Barakur, garri, ssoned Bagevadi, put down the Muslims of Udayavar and the Mapillas under Sadri. The Kodavas set fire to the mosques, and ravaged the entire Kanara area and extended the Coorg boundaries. They plundered Puttur, Bantwal, Uppinangadi, Mangalore and other places, and they did it "in Coorg style". This was in 1799, exactly 170 years back and soon after Tipu's fall, who had a tough time at the hands of the Kodavas. Bopu died in Mercara in 1806 and his family was well rewarded by the Raja both in cash and in the form of lands. His cemetery in Mercara is close to that of the Rajas, and in that it is inscribed on a stone that he was "a faithful commander, a great marksman, hunter of tigers and elephants and a hero who had faced Tipu's army." (Refer to Page 62 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Chengappa Biddanda:—He served as one of the Forest Officers in Coorg and later joined the All India service.

He was posted in Andamans and Nicobar Islands where he served as a Chief of the Forest department for many years and left a profound impression of his enthusiastic work, and was rewarded as well. For some time he was also at the Forest College, Dehra Dun. Chengappa retired in 1953 and he is now a leading coffee planter.

Chengappa Ketolira :—Born as a man of destiny by the grace of Lord Igguthappa, this son of a village official, completed his matriculation in 1893 and left for Madras Christian College where he passed his F.A., in 1895. He did his B.A., at the Presidency College, Madras in 1898 and joined service in Coorg in 1899, i.e. exactly 70 years back. He was a Subedar in 1909, Assistant Commissioner in 1916 and the first Indian District Magistrate in 1921. He acted as the Commissioner of Coorg in 1934–35 and he was the first Indian to hold the post. His photographs appeared in the Indian newspapers and that was the first time that happened that way in the case of Kodavas. He retired in 1935 but kept himself active, and in 1942 he did the honorary job as the chief of the National War Front in Coorg. In April 1943, Chengappa was recalled from his retirement and appointed as Chief Commissioner of Coorg, again the first Indian to have had that honour. He had a series of titles such as Rao Saheb in 1919, Rao Bahadur in 1924, Dewan Bahadur (the only man in Coorg to have been honoured as such) in 1935 and the title of C. I. E. (Companion of Indian Empire) in 1946, and again the only Indian in Coorg to be entitled as such. When the freedom came to the country in 1947, it was Ketolira Chengappa, a statesman of a remarkable stature and dignity who served the British Government for 38

long years, hoisted the National flag after bringing down the Union Jack, at the Mercara Fort. It was he who was hailed as the leader of his people. Chengappa retired from service in March 1948. He was a loyal public servant and also a nationalist of immense self-respect and a proud son of the soil who loved his culture and traditions. He was a good sportsman and a noted Shikar. He lived a long purposeful life, Chengappa was also a leading coffee planter. He died in his 90, in 1963. (Refer to Pages 104, 114 & 187 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India".)

Chengappa Kodandera :—One of the early batches of the School Endowment scholars, Chengappa qualified himself at the Dehra Dun Imperial School of Forests in 1899, and served in Madras and died in Coorg in 1959. He is remembered for his liberal contribution to the Kodava Education Fund and several scholarships are being floated in his name. (Refer to Page 273 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Chengappa Mathanda :—Son of Appachanna, Chengappa was one of the first batch of matriculates of Coorg. He left for England to study for Law in 1872, that is 98 years back and he was the first among the Kodavas to go abroad. Chengappa, however, had to return soon due to his ill health. The Government offered a post to him as an attache in the Mysore Commission but by that time he fell ill and died in 1876. His cemetery in Mercara, is by the side of the road leading to Murnad. The Education Report of 1877 said that, "Chengappa, the young Coorg (Kodava), having gone to England and engaged in the study of law at Cambridge, it is very sad to record that he contracted consumption and was forced to return to his native country. Here he has since fallen a victim to the insidious disease ;

his elder brother carried off by cholera, preceding him to the grave by only a few days. Thus has been brought to the verge of extinction, one of the chief Coorg families, distinguished in many heroic traditions." (Refer to Page 187 of "A Tiny Model State".)

Chengappa Pandanda :—He is a leading coffee planter, an energetic public worker, philanthropist and a Rao Bahadur of the British times. When the Coorg District Board began to be administered by the non-official public men, it was Chengappa who became its first President in nineteen thirties. Later in 1943, he succeeded Ketolira Chengappa as honorary chief of the National War Front. Mild mannered as he is, Chengappa had no definite views on any aspect of political or social matters but he worked whole heartedly for causes such as Voters' Association, the Kodava Samaja, the Kodava Education Fund etc ; while his wife Seethamma who predeceased him in 1967, was also an active social worker and one of the founders of the Mercara Mahila Samaja.

Chengappa Pandikuthira :—He joined service in the Coorg Cooperative department and later in 1935 left for England from where he earned diplomas in his subject, and consequently in 1942, became the Registrar of Cooperative Societies. His industry and enthusiasm was the cause for Coorg being "saturated with cooperative societies". Chengappa retired in 1954, and later for a period of eight years, he served as a Principal of the Cooperative Institute in Poona. In 1963 he was given an assignment by the United Nations Economics Council, when he worked for some time in Africa and elsewhere. He is widely travelled.

Chengappa Telapanda :—The Kodavas have made a

name even as men of religion and of missionary spirit. Chengappa joined the Ramakrishna Mission to become Swami Shambhavananda, and, as an ascetic and missionary, he did a good deal of social work in Coorg as well as Mysore. The Ramakrishna Schools and Students' Home in Mysore are the results of his enterprise and relentless hard work. (Refer to Page 188 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Cheramana Chonira :—Hyder Ali, after his victorious Bedanore expedition, returned to Mysore through Coorg in 1763, and claimed Coorg also thinking that Coorg was just a part of the fallen kingdom of Bedanore or Ikkeri. Chikkavirappa, the Raja of Coorg, sent his army commander Chonira Cheramana to negotiate with Hyder Ali at Srirangapatna and to explain the position of Coorg as an independent unit during the days of Ikkeri kingdom. In the meantime, Hyder's men had already invaded Coorg but they were made to retreat. Hyder then claimed Rs. three lakhs as expenses of war from Coorg. It was then he saw the Kodavas as handsome and gallant fighters, and when his men brought some heads of "finest forms" and placed before him. Hyder was so much touched by the fine featured heads and asked if they "felt no compunction in cutting off such comely heads; and, immediately ordered the decapitation to cease". Those were the Kodavas of those days. Chonira Cheramana was one such soldier and diplomat who had undertaken an important mission, and he did his job very well in about 1765, that is exactly 205 years back. Cheramana, unfortunately could not return home, but on his way from Srirangapatna, he was infected by small-pox and died in Mysore.

Chetticha Merianda :—He was a Nad official during the

time of Kanara insurrection. He mobilised the Kodava units and marched down the Ghats and captured or killed a good number of men who supported the imposters. He earned appreciation from Capt. Le Hardy as well as Dewan Bopanna for his courage and splendid service. That was in 1837, i. e., 133 years back.

Chinnappa Mandepanda :—One of the oldest Kodava graduates of Madras University, Chinnappa did his B. A., in 1844 and later he did his L.T. Thus he became the first trained graduate teacher among the Kodavas, and he worked at Mercara Central School. Chinnappa was a remarkable personality of great eminence and discipline. He died prematurely and his large size photograph adores the hall of the school where he studied and then served.

Chinnappa Nadikerianda :—Born in 1875, this author of the celebrated ' Pattole Palame ' completed his F.A., course in Mangalore and then worked as a teacher for some time. In 1900, he was appointed as a revenue Inspector and after two years became a Jemedar in Coorg Regiment. In 1904, he joined the police department as an Inspector. He took keen interest in public work, especially in co-operative societies. He wrote his ' Pattole Palame ' as a result of the suggestions thrown to him by Hilton Brown and other Europeans who were interested in the subject. After that he translated the Bhagavad Gita in the form of Kodava ballads. Chinnappa died in 1931. (Refer to Page 194 of " A Tiny Model State. ")

Chondu Kullachanda :—This looks like a pet name of the man, because, among the Kodavas such a name as Chondu for males, was not heard at all at any time. Chondu hailed from Ammathi-Nad. During the Raja's time in

the 18th century, he went round Coorg obtaining gifts from all the temples or temple chiefs. Later he was met by an opponent known as Kayyendira Appayya. Both these men were great heroes of the time and they subdued or defeated a number of local chiefs, and finally Chondu himself was killed by Appayya. There are folk songs and ballads in honour of Chondu also.

Devayya Codanda:—Son of Madayya, Devayya was known for his piety, generosity and charitable disposition. He donated money to numerous religious institutions and public organizations, and he helped many students to prosecute their studies. He died in 1944 and a memorial fund was started soon after his death with the then Chief Commissioner of Coorg himself presiding over the public meeting.

Devayya Koluvanda:—He was one of the Nad parpathigars in 1836-37, and with a large body of men, he marched down the Ghats to quell the rebellious elements. He was joined by Madeyanda Devayya, and both these men did a wonderful job of routing the imposters from their hide out, and liquidating the ring leaders who plotted to overthrow the British Government in Coorg. The Kodavas on the whole terrorised the entire Tulunad and Malnad (Malabar) in a way what can be again called, "in Coorg style" and returned victorious.

Doddavva Alamanda:—The lady so called because of her huge build and remarkable courage and strength. She was also very rich and influential and the Alamanda house in Beppu-Nad was a centre of social and political activities during the days of the Rajas. Her time is not exactly known, and according to some versions she lived in about

1765, and that is about 205 years back. (Refer to Page 30 of the "Tiny Model State".)

Doddayya Kannanda:—Hyder Ali's one of the expeditions into Coorg was in 1767, i.e., exactly 203 years back. He sent his force under one Fazulla Khan who was defeated by the Kodavas in a series of wars that started at Igoor. The Kodavas looted the enemy camp and collected treasures, guns, ammunition etc. After this victory they faced Hyder's men again at Kajur in North Coorg where the Commander Kannanda Doddanna fell fighting in 1767. That was an important incident in the history of the Kodavas. About ten years later, Tipu caused to burn a good number of houses of Doddanna's family in Mercara. After some time, the Kannanda people honoured their ancestor who fell dead as a Dalvoy or Commander. Near the Kannanda house in Mercara there is a stone slab with a relief picture of a Coorg warrior and also another small silver replica of the ancient warrior kept in their house as a token of commemoration of Doddanna and other warriors of the great family who were attacked by the enemies many a time.

39. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (iv)

Ganapathy Biddanda:—An intelligent, enterprising, well-informed and well-educated Ganapathy, was of a scholarly eminence. He was very progressive in his views and his political knowledge was immense. He used to contribute articles to the English papers outside Coorg in about 1910 and even before. He took active interest in the cooperative movement and the Land-holders' Associa-

tion. (Refer to page 101 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Ganapathy Godanda Col. :—Son of Appacha, he did his L.M. & S., at Madras and joined as Assistant Surgeon in Cuddapah in 1881. He served in Madras presidency for a long time and then became an Army surgeon. He had the distinction of winning the Military Cross during the World War I. (Refer to Page 273 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Ganapathy Konganda :—Subedar of Mercara and later a 2nd Assistant Commissioner, Ganapathy was an influential officer and public worker. A street in Mercara is named after him in honour of his services and for providing water supply facilities for the people of a street, and that was in 1895.

Kariappa Allapanda Brig. :—He was one of the first batch of the Commissioned officers during the early days of the 2nd World War, Kariappa, a name-sake of Gen. Kariappa, was thus the first among the war-time recruits and among the Kodavas, to rise up to the position of a Brigadier in 1965.

Kariappa Apparanda :—A sportsman of a rare talent, Kariappa was unrivalled in hockey, cricket, tennis etc. when he was still a student in the schools. He was in Malaya for over twenty years where his name is enshrined as a great player. One famous Malayan sports-journal wrote about him that, "To score four goals on his first appearance in the State matches after two seasons during an interval in which he has not played the game regularly, is a feat which will be hard to parallel." Kariappa returned to Coorg in 1946, and in 1948, he became a victim of an accidental gun-shot while hunting wild game and that

invalidated him in his last days. But even then, Kariappa took part in cricket matches when he would easily score a century. Long after he left Malaya, the "Singapore Tiger Standard" commented about him in its issue of the 9th Feb. 1954, that, "The First Indian to appear in the Test was Kariappa.....He will be recalled by those who had the pleasure of seeing hockey in the old days for the wrist work. He was a sure-fire goal-getter when a corner hit was taken. He had the wonderful knack of stopping the ball dead and driving it into goal with a strength and speed that has never been duplicated." Such precious gems should have been in the All India Sport Teams, but, of course, the times were different. Kariappa died in August 1968 in his 70. (Courtesy.—The Kodagu Weekly of the 6th September 1968.)

Kariappa Bollera :—Son of Chengappa, a reputed planter of South Coorg, Kariappa is of the Indian Administrative Service and has worked in different parts of India from the far-East of Nagaland up to the west coast of Bombay. An officer of intelligence and drive, Kariappa has held many responsible administrative positions with great ability and tact.

Kariappa Chowrira :—He was one of the very significant ministers during the time of Viraraja the Elder in about the year 1805. Kariappa was also called a Dewan, and he was a colleague of Keremane Hombale Naik. After the Raja's death in 1809, and when his minor daughter Devammaji was made to succeed him and when Lingaraja was making efforts to usurp power, Kariappa had a good deal to do as the chief headman and in reconciling the entire situation.

Kariappa Codanda Brig :—Another name-sake as well as a nephew of Gen. Kariappa, this Codanda Cariappa is another of the war-time recruits to the Indian Army as a commissioned officer. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier in 1967, and he is the seventh Brigadier among the Kodavas.

Kariappa Kodandera General :—This name is a household word in the contemporary India. With his elevation to the post of Brigadier in 1944, the first Indian to become one, the name and fame of Coorg also rose high simultaneously. From 1918 to 1946, Kariappa's services as an army officer has been manifold and in different parts of the country and the world, and as a consequence he was already a widely travelled man. From 1946 to 1948, he served in different Army Reorganization Committees and also led the Kashmir war. From 1949 to 1953, he was free India's first Indian Commander-in-Chief, and from 1953 to 1956, he was the High Commissioner for India in Australia, the first and the only man in Karnataka to go on ambassadorial assignments. After his retirement, Kariappa was active in many official and non-official organizations, ex-Servicemen's organizations, and as Chairman of the All India Sports Council. He is a nationalist of original views and he is rightly hailed as a "Soldier-patriot." Names such as these should always inspire not only those who carry the same name (but don't acknowledge those benefits they had with gratitude,) but also the others of the community. Much about Kariappa has been told in the Chapter 31 of the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India" and in the Biography of Kariappa, published in 1964.

Kariappa Koluvanda :—He was the only Kodava lad to

join the Central School, Mercara, in 1855, soon after it was founded. In a way it could be said that he was the first among the Kodavas to acquire English education in a school then conducted on the model of a Public School. Later Kariappa, became an official in the revenue department and then Subedar of Mercara taluk. It was his desire that influenced Rev. Richter, Mathanda Appachanna, Konganda Appayya and others to start the School Endowment Fund, the petition concerning which was signed on the 17th October 1963 by 650 leading citizens of Coorg. Kariappa was also an ardent champion of English education in Coorg and it was he who influenced the construction of the Central School building with the task of collecting funds from the public. He got a separate school building built to foster girls' education, and in 1871 he wrote to the Government to appoint an European mistress to run the institution. Rev. Richter certified that Kariappa, "has been foremost amongst the Kodavas in encouraging general education." Kariappa, in his last days, was a leading coffee planter.

Kariappa Manyapanda:—He is another Indian Administrative Service Officer who served in Madras and later in Andhra States, in various secretorial and administrative positions. Currently he is at the Central Secretariat, New Delhi.

Karumbayya Chendrimada:—He was one of the brilliant students among the old batch of the School Endowment scholars. Karumbayya passed his B.A , degree examination in II class, in 1892, i.e. 78 years back. He was a student of the Madras Christian College. It was the Kodava students of this brand, who were responsible to enhance the

fame and prestige of the community outside Coorg in those days.

Karumbayya Kollimada :—An old Congress-man, and one of the first four in 1930 to get arrested during the freedom movement, Karumbayya was just picked up to represent Coorg in 1954-55 at the Rajya Sabha or the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. He was a nominated member of the Congress-party that advocated merger of Coorg. In political matters, Karumbayya had no definite idea of anything and he was just a defector from one group to the other.

Kushalappa Biddanda :—He started his career as a teacher in 1920, obtained a diploma in Education from London in 1924, became the deputy Inspector of Schools in 1928, headmaster of Virarajpet and Mercara High Schools from 1939 and District Education Officer in 1948. Kushalappa retired from service in 1950. He was an acting Principal of the Mercara College for a few months and then got into the local politics. He was elected on the Congress party ticket in the 1952 general elections to the Coorg legislative assembly and consequently became the Speaker of the same, and when Coorg was merged into Mysore in November 1956, Kushalappa was the provisional Speaker of the new State Assembly for a couple of months. As a politician, Kushalappa had no clear-cut views on the future of Coorg. He is a leading coffee planter, and in 1968, he was elected as president of Mysore State Planters' Association. An active, energetic and enthusiastic worker, Kushalappa gave his best to whatever assignments he had undertaken.

Kushalappa Paruwangada :—A Congress-man and ap

active member of the Coorg Land-holders' Association, Kushalappa died very early in his youth in Madras while he was on his way back from the All India Congress sessions to which he attended as a delegate. His death in 1928, removed one of the promising nationalists of Coorg. A part of the Ponnampet town is called after his name—as Kushalpur. (Refer to Page 103 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Kuttappa Biddanda :—He was the first in Coorg to become a Master of Arts graduate of Madras University. With a reputation for intelligence and scholarship, Kuttappa served in Madras throughout and returned to Coorg to spend his retirement, and died in about 1960.

Kuttayya Kodandera :—One of the old matriculates, Kuttayya did his F.A., course also and joined service as a Nad parpathigar. Kuttayya rose up to the position of Assistant Commissioner in 1901 and retired from service in 1909. Later he took active interest in public work, especially in Coorg Landholders' Association, District Board etc. He has also erected some public buildings in Coorg and contributed to the water supply facilities to a part of Mercara town which is called Dechur in honour of the name of his wife. Kuttayya died in 1924.

Madappa Apparanda :—He was one of the first Indian executive engineers placed in a responsible position in the then Central Province in about 1918 or so. Madappa's appointment was then hailed as a step ahead towards Indianisation of services in Public Works Department of the country. He died long after his retirement at his estate near Mercara in the year 1944.

Madappa Kodandera :—Son of Chengappa, he belonged to the very first batch of the candidates of the Indian

Administrative Service. He served for quite a time in the former Madras and Andhra States and then left for the Central Secretariat. As Under Secretary and Joint Secretary in different Union Ministries, Madappa has gone on delegation to various foreign countries. He is considered as an officer of ability and integrity. Currently he is the Director-General of Indian Shipping.

Madayya Codanda :—He was the son of Head-Sherestedar Appacha who was a close colleague of Mathanda Appachanna. Madayya was one of the first two Kodavas to pass the matriculation examination in 1871, and then joined the Mysore Government service. He donated a good lot of books to the Central School Library in 1877. He was a Town Magistrate in Mysore in 1884, Under-Secretary to the Dewan of Mysore in 1889 and Deputy Commissioner in Chikmagalur and other Mysore districts from 1890. He drew a high salary of more than Rs. 1000 in those days and that was considered as a fantastic sum. Madayya was a widely respected public servant and he was held in high esteem even by the Maharaja of Mysore. When the Maharaja visited Coorg, he stayed in Madayya's Mercara residence, "Chamaraja Villa." He was the first Kodava to serve in a distinguished position outside Coorg in the last century. In his last days he gave his best to Coorg and was a moving spirit behind the Land-holders' Association as its President. On the issue of the future of Coorg, he roused the people's conscience and took the issue even up to the Government of India level in those days. (Refer to Page 101 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Madayya Nerapanda :—He was a Subedar of Padinalknad taluk in 1936-37. After Dewan Bopanna, it was

Madayya who commanded the Kodava army units and led them to war to South Kanara during the Kanara insurrection instigated by a couple of imposters. Madayya was a right-hand man of Capt. Le Hardy, and a very powerful figure who brought the campaign to a successful end.

Mandanna Appachira :—There are two versions about the life and time of Mandanna. The first version is that he had belonged to the time of the first Raja of Coorg in the 17th century, and that he was one of his body guards. It is said that the Raja sent him to fight the invaders from Mysore and Mandanna defeated the intruders more than once. Stones commemorating his victory are said to have been kept at Gorur and other frontier villages of Mysore. As years passed on Mandanna became a sort of legendary figure with many folk songs in circulation about him. Another version about Mandanna is that he lived in about 1765, and that he took part in the war against the men of Hyder Ali. It is said that he too fell fighting in Kajur along with Kannada Doddayya. It appears that Mandanna told Muddu Raja before going to the war that, "Twice have I returned after defeating the Muslims and made obeisance to the Raja, but this time I shall not return." Anyway, Mandanna, it can be asserted, was a celebrated Kodava hero of the by-gone days.

Mandanna Mandepanda :—An old matriculate and an F.A., Mandanna worked in the police department for a long time, and then became a Subedar and later the deputy Director of Land Records. In 1936, he succeeded Ketolira Chengappa as Assistant Commissioner and District Magistrate. He was honoured with the title of Rao Bahadur.

He acted as Commissioner of Coorg for short periods and that was an enviable opportunity in those days. After his retirement in 1941, Mandanna was appointed as a Dewan of a small native State called Banganapalle, near Bellary, for two years, and then he settled at his Wodderhalli Estate near Siddapur.

40. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (v)

Medappa Palekanda :—A law graduate of Madras University, Medappa belonged to the first batch of members of the Coorg Legislative Council in 1924. He was also one of the leading persons of the Kodava Sabha organization. In 1929, he was appointed as the Subordinate Judge, Coorg. In 1933, he became the Sessions Judge at C & M Station, Bangalore. In 1944, he was the Judge of the Mysore High Court and then in 1948 became the Chief Justice of the High Court of the former State of Mysore. Either as a politician or as an eminent Judge, Medappa was a controversial figure and yet a colourful personality. He was also an outspoken and fearless judge and the famous "Chief Justice Poison case" proceedings might have been incorporated in the Law Journals of the country, and that was the case that was concerned to Medappa's upright and bold career, in addition to his own outstanding achievements in respect of some episodes like the Gopala Rao Enquiry Case where he was rated as an eminent and honest Judge. Medappa retired from service in 1956 and then settled at his Bangalore residence where he died in 1968. (Refer to Page 187 of "A Tiny

Model State.*)

Monnayya Mandepanda :—He was a Subedar in 1836-37 during the time of the Kanara rebellion. Monnayya was one of the leading figures who recruited thousands of Kodavas and led them towards the West to fight against the non-Kodava pretenders, imposters and their men. Monnayya came out successful in many skirmishes and minor wars and he was considered as a gallant soldier. He was rewarded liberally for his prowess.

Muddayya Alamanda :—He was a grandson of the celebrated Alamanda Doddavva who lived in the middle of the eighteenth century. Her family had a vast area of Jaghir lands, and one of her grand-sons, Muddayya, became a Dewan in the time of Muddu Raja II, and that was in about 1768, exactly 200 years back. (Refer to Page 30 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.*")

Muddayya Karneravanda :—He was a Subedar in 1836-37 during the time of the Kanara insurrection. Muddayya led a separate group of some hundreds of men and did a splendid job of putting down the rebellion. He was also amply awarded for his significant service.

Muddayya Mukkatira :—An elder brother Aypanna ALIAS Chennabasappa, the brother-in-law of the last Raja, Muddayya was another unfortunate person in the history of Coorg. He was a Munshi under Linga Raja II, and continued to serve as such in the time of the last Raja also. But Kunta Basava, the evil genius in the Raja's court, found a rival to him in Muddayya. When Aypanna with his wife, fled to Mysore with charges against the Raja, and took protection of the British Resident there, the unscrupulous Kunta Basava told the Raja that Muddayya

was responsible for all the trouble, although the latter was a harmless individual. Finally, things led to the murder of Muddayya by Kunta Basava with the consent of the stupid Raja. The English officers in 1834 proved with the excavated bodies of all those murdered victims including that of Devammaji, the daughter of Viraraja the Elder, and with the support of the relevant eye witnesses of that horrid scene, that both the Raja and his Dewan were wicked men. Some recent historians take a sentimental fancy to support the Raja and decry the British of falsehood, and I too had maintained that position some years back. But the facts are now found as different. The Raja and some others who were with him were just murderers, and it was God's gift to the country that there was a change of such a barbaric regime to a better and a modern one. (Refer to Page 63 of "A Tiny Model State of South India.")

Muthamma Chonira Miss :—She passed with distinction in the Indian Administrative Service examinations in 1949, and she was the first Indian lady to come out second in rank in the all India contest. She has served in the Indian consulates and embassies in the foreign countries, and is now at the Central Secretariat, Foreign Service branch. (Refer to Page 188 of "Tiny Model State.")

Muthanna Bonira :—Doddavirappa, the Raja of Coorg, had troubles from his neighbours, and especially of Raja Viravarma of Cherakkal who had not fulfilled his promise by paying Rs. nine lakhs. Therefore, the Raja was in search of a hero who would subdue the Malayalee chief. It was then Bonira Muthanna came forward. The Raja sent him with 5000 men to Malabar to attack Viravarma

who was plotting against Muthanna. But the latter, with the help of the timely intelligence that he received, gave a tough fight to Viravarma of Cherakkal, Ali Raja of Cannanore and others and defeated them. He also saw that no Malayalee entered Coorg from any side. With this success of Muthanna, the prestige of the Coorg Raja was enhanced and the chief of Ikkeri was also relieved of the interference of these Malayalee chiefs. All this was in about 1735, that is, about 235 years back. Muthanna was amply rewarded by the Raja with the Jama and Jaghir lands near his house in Murnad. But after some years Bonira family had become extinct, and, therefore, Muthanna's property was given to Keremane Hombale Nayak by Viraraja the Elder whose trusted lieutenant he was. (Refer to Page 38 of "A Tiny Model State.")

*Muthanna (Karyakaar) :—*His family name is not shown in the records. Karyakaar Muthanna was better known as Subedar Muthanna, and it could be said that he was the first Kodava to visit Madras in 1809, i.e. 162 years back. After the death of Viraraja the Elder, his son-in-law, the Sode Raja, the husband of the princess Devammaji, sent Muthanna and the other two men, among whom one was a Parsee, to Madras on a delegation to see Lord Minto, the Governor-General, in order to obtain the British Government's approval for installing the minor princess Devammaji on the throne. What exactly the outcome of this delegation was not clear. From a letter to the Dewan Laxmana Rao by the Sode Raja, it was made known after some time that Muthanna and his two companions were later on killed as they were coming back to Coorg. It was rumoured that the plot was engineered

by Linga Raja II who was then trying to come to power himself after disregarding the claims of Devammaji. However, it could be said that Subedar Muthanna, the first Kodava to visit Madras, was the second Kodava diplomat, after Chonira Cheramana who went under a similar assignment to Srirangapatna about 45 years prior to that in 1763-64.

Muthanna Manyapanda :—An old F. A. scholar of Madras, Muthanna passed out of the college in 1884, and joined the Coorg Forest department as Sub-Assistant Conservator of Forests. In 1886, he was transferred to the then Central Province with the rank of Assistant Conservator. In a few years he took charge of Mysore Forest Department as Chief Conservator of Forests and his work was found as extraordinary. When the Prince of Wales visited the Khedda in Mysore in 1905, Muthanna's work was appreciated stating that his "efforts were crowned with success." But Muthanna is better known to the Kodavas by his work in Coorg after his retirement. He became an associate of Codanda Madayya, in addition to their own relationship, and both of them took active interest in public work. Muthanna worked in Land-holders' Association and other organizations and he was chiefly responsible to start the Kodagu Press and the Kodagu Weekly. (Refer to Page 101 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Muthanna Naleyanda Capt. :—A Master of Arts and a Bachelor of Law, Muthanna secured a Commission in the Army, and as an Army Officer, Captain Muthanna did his Indian Administrative Service examinations also successfully, and thus he established a new record both in his professional and academic achievements. Muthanna, who

is now working in Bellary district of Karnataka has bright prospects ahead.

Muthanna Pandana :—A very industrious person and a staunch nationalist, Muthanna was also an intellectual of a rear type. He was a much respected man of his time. He wrote two or three books about Coorg and Kodavas, and has endeavoured to give some searching information about Coorg of his times. He died in 1933. (Refer to Page 194 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Muthayya Codanda :—In this work of mine, I am omitting the names of the Kodava sportsmen in order to avoid repetition, but I cannot do that in respect of Muthayya, who was a Mysore University champion, Mysore State champion and finally the all India champion in several items. He hit the headline in sports many times. In 1953 he captained the boys' team in the inter-University athletic championships held at Aligarh. He was adjudged as best in eight items. He was India's decathlon champion twice. In 1956, he obtained a special prize for all round performance at East Germany athletics. He was the only Indian to be awarded a special prize for the all-round performance of the world University Summer Games held at Budapest. At the Asian Games in Tokyo, Muthayya won the decathlon, beating the Asian record that had been established by a Chinese. Thus, a versatile man in the world of sport, Muthayya's record has been consistently high, and as a coach too, he stood above all others in the whole of India.

Monnappa Pemmanda :—He joined as a Police Inspector in Madras service in nineteen twenties, and served in various levels till he rose up to the position of Inspector—

General of Police. He was the Inspector-General of Andhra State from 1953 and of Mysore from 1956. Monnappa is known for his simplicity in manners, for integrity as an officer and for discipline and efficiency as administrator. He retired from service in 1959. He has been honoured with titles and efficiency awards many times. (Refer to Page 273 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Nanjappa Codanda Dr. :—An old L. M. & S. of Madras University, Nanjappa joined as an assistant surgeon in Mysore Government in 1891. While he was serving in Chikmagalur, he applied for the assistance from the School Endowment Fund, to go to England, but the Government declined to comply with his request. Later he went to England with his family and returned to become the Durbar Surgeon at the palace of the Maharaja of Mysore, and a ward has been erected there in his memory. After Dr. Nanjappa's death, his wife *Ponnappa* lived in his Mercara residence, Krishnaraja Villa, till her death in 1954. Mahatma Gandhi during his visit to Coorg in 1933, stayed as a guest of Mrs. Nanjappa and a stone slab is kept there to mark the historic occasion. (Refer to Pages 136 & 187 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Nanjappa Kademada :—Well-known as Swami Narayananda, Nanjappa is a serious student of Hindu religion and philosophy. He took to the spiritual life renouncing every thing and left Coorg as a monk to the foot of the Himalayas and Rishikesh. He has written several books on Hindu theology and one could see a ripe scholar in his works. (Refer to Page 188 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Nanjappa Kambiranda :—He did his F.A., at the Central College, Bangalore, and his B.A., in Madras. Later he

studied for law at Madras and became the first law-graduate, B.A., B.L. of Coorg in 1888 i.e. 82 years back. Nanjappa started practising in Mercara, and was appointed a public prosecutor in 1890, a Munsiff Magistrate at Mercara in 1892 and subordinate judge of Coorg in 1903. Nanjappa was thus an outstanding legal luminary of those days. His services to Coorg were manifold and a memorial fund was started in his honour soon after his death about fifty years back but nothing is known about that now. His son Ganapathy, a barrister-at-law, served in Madras as District Judge in various districts and finally retired as Registrar of Madras High Court. Ganapathy died in Madras in about 1960.

Nanjappa Kodandera :—A brother of Gen. Kariappa Nanjappa joined the then Imperial Bank of India after his graduation in Madras, and after a year's study at the Law College. He steadily rose up in his career and became the Secretary & Treasurer of the Bank which was later called the State Bank of India, and served in Madras and Bombay. Later he left for the London branch of the said bank from where he retired and returned to India. After that he took up an assignment at the Overseas Bank of India and then as the managing-director of the Allahabad Bank. His career in the Bank, ranging over a period of forty years, has been spectacularly successful. Nanjappa remains a bachelor. (Refer to Page 23 of the biography of Gen. Cariappa.)

Nanjappa Koravanda :—An old matriculate of the eighteen-eighties, Nanjappa passed the Pleader's examination and became an influential lawyer at Mercara. He was appointed as the public prosecutor in 1890, and he even

tried for the post of the assistant commissioner in those days. He was a philanthropist of considerable reputation and a leading coffee planter. (Refer to Page 260 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Ponnappa & Somayya Biddanda :—In a book, "Golden Deeds of India" it is mentioned about these two Biddanda brothers, sons of Poovayya. The reference to them in that book was that while they were in Madras as students in about 1890, i.e. 80 years back, they rescued a woman, just a law-caste one, who had desperately jumped into the sea in a bid to commit suicide. Ponnappa and Somayya who were then at the beach, risked their own lives to save the other, and in spite of the by-standers trying to prevent them from harbouring on such a job in that high waters of the evening hours. Such gallant but un-noticed and unrecorded 'deeds' among the Kodavas are very many if one takes to recount such instances.

Ponnappa Cheppudira Brig. :—He was one of the first batch of Indian officers recruited to the Indian Army in 1918. He retired in 1950 as a Brigadier and returned to Coorg, but since 1962, he has settled in Bangalore. His son Capt. Rajaram Ponnappa died in his thirties, and he was known as an artist. His sculptural wood works were exhibited in India and in some foreign countries and were much appreciated.

Ponnappa Cheppudira Dewan :—He was one of the four Dewans of the time of the last Raja of Coorg. While his colleague, Dewan Laxminarayya was a leader of the non-Kodavas, and Dewan Apparanda Bopanna was the leader of the Kodavas, it was Ponnappa who was mysteriously sitting on the fence. With Dewan Kunta Basava playing his

mischievous role against the Kodavas, the cleavage between the Kodavas and the non-Kodavas had reached to a dangerous extent. When the Raja was deposed in 1834 by the British and assisted by Dewan Bopanna and other Kodavas, Ponnappa seemed to have been on the side of the Raja. This attitude of Ponnappa was taken advantage of men like Kunta Basava who even assaulted him once in the presence of the Raja. When the Raja was exiled, Ponnappa followed him as far as Bangalore, and was able to obtain a good amount of money from his fallen chief. When the Raja's treasure was buried in one or two way-side places, it was Ponnappa as a trusted lieutenant of the Raja, who was actually digging the pits burying treasures etc. with his own hand and with one or two of his colleagues. When Ponnappa desired to follow the Raja even from Bangalore to Vellore, he was persuaded by the British officers to return to Coorg on security grounds, and from then on Ponnappa passed on his loyalty to the British, his new masters. Ponnappa's opportunistic attitude was again exploited by the non-Kodavas who charged him of complicity in the Kanara rebellion of 1837, but by that time, the British found Ponnappa ultra-loyal to them and they found that there was no truth in the charge, that was brought against him. During the Kanara insurrection, it was Dewan Bopanna who was hailed as a hero, Dewan Laxminarayya as a betrayer who was consequently arrested and punished, and Ponnappa as one who had no views of his own and as just a time-server, was left behind in Mercara entrusted with the official duties. Ponnappa's survival first under the Raja and later under the British, was considered as

wonderful especially when there were many charges against him on his time-serving attitude. Ponnampet town bears the name of Ponnappa. (Refer to Chapters 12 & 13 of "A Tiny Model State," but that was written when many of the facts concerning Ponnappa's life was not known to this author with relevant authority and evidence.)

Ponnappa Kalyatanda:—Son of Kuttayya of Nalknad, it is said that Ponnappa was born by the grace of god Igguthappa. He was a hero of the 17th century, well-versed in witch-craft and consequently performed many miraculous feats. It is said that he had fought with many powerful men and killed a good many of them. His story ends that he was himself poisoned by an old woman, Ponnappa is a legendary figure in Coorg with folk songs and ballads sung in his honour, and even festivals are held in his memory in Makki temple near Napoklu and some other temples.

41. WHO IS WHO AMONG THE KODAVAS (vi)

Ponnappa Kongettira:—One of the early batches of the School Endowment Scholarship holders, Ponnappa was the first to study for Engineering in Poona and to obtain the L.C.E degree of the University of Bombay in 1891, i. e. 81 years back. Later he became a leading planter at Chethalli.

Ponnappa Paradanda:—He was a Karyakaar or a Commander under Doddavirappa Raja of Coorg in about the year 1718, exactly 253 years back. He was asked to put down the rebel Nayaks like Achu Nayak, Kolakongi Nayak of Kadiet Nad and Utha Nayak of Beppunad.

Ponnappa marched with his army, killed Kolakongi and arrested Achu Nayak. This success of Ponnappa raised him to the position of Dewan, and was also rewarded by the Raja with the land of Kolakongi Nayak as there were no heirs to that property at Kunjilageri village. As the land belonged to Kunjilageri Mukkatira family, Paradanda Ponnappa was called Mukkatira Ponnappa from that time. His descendants, therefore, still remember their Paradanda ancestry, and during the annual Hutri festival they send Pooja offerings to Paradanda house in Padinalknad. Those were the times when many Kodavas rebelled against the Lingayat regime, and Ponnappa's grand-sons, Karumbayya and Madayya, also fought against Lingaraja I, who sought the support of Hyder Ali. Karumbayya's son was Kuttappa, and the latter's daughters, Akkavva and Ammavva, were married to Lingaraja II, in 1814. (About Ponnappa, Refer to Page 30 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Ponnanna Kullettira :—When Viraraja the Elder was still a minor, Tipu's men entered Coorg and did a lot of havoc. In the process, Kullettira and the other neighbouring family houses of the Kodavas were destroyed. It was then the Kodavas thought that the Coorg princes were to be brought back from their imprisonment at Peryapatna and be reinstated on the throne and thus get rid of the Muslims. Kullettira Ponnappa took a leading part in that, and under him the Kodavas rallied and they drove Nagappayya, the governor of Tipu. Ponnanna had become a Commander by that time, and he dashed against Ghulam Ali and defeated him at the war that was fought at Heggala and then set out to capture Kote Raja. Later

Ponnanna went with an army to Kushalnagar, captured the fort and killed the chief man of Tipu, and showed the victim's head to the Raja who was then camping in Virarajpet. Among many heroes of the time of Viraraja the Elder, Ponnanna was famous, courageous and a dashing type of soldier as well as Commander. He was amply rewarded by the Raja with Jama and Jaghir lands. (Refer to pages 37 & 38 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India")

Poonacha Cheppudira :—Poonacha took to politics taking a negative view of the situation that existed, and, with his emergence, as I see in records before me, as a member of the Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee as early as 1938, his defection too began. From that time all his activities were anti-Coorg, and, his private ambition was voiced as public service. It is not clear if the K.P.C.C. picked Poonacha, or Poonacha himself volunteered to be there. Whatever that may be, the disgruntled elements of Coorg wanted a Kodava to fight against the Kodavas and they had one in Cheppudira Poonacha. With the fostering care of the K.P.C.C., and of the then chief S. Nijalingappa, Poonacha was able to climb up the political ladder but with no opinion of his own in the political affairs of the country. With that the people of Coorg were also able to know what exactly the quality of politics and the politicians of the country. The rest of the things about Poonacha is said in the pages behind. As a member of the Union Cabinet, he resigned in November 1969 on the plea that his lady prime minister was dismissed from the Organization Congress whose President was Nijalingappa. That was alright in spite of Poonacha trying hard to be neutral till the last moment and thus stick on to his post

Then again it was reported in February 1970 that he took some other job as a chief of some chemical industries, but my unanswered question is as to who appointed him for the job and which of the scores of political parties in the country found him indispensable, especially after he quit the ruling Congress party. Poonacha certainly knows to sail with his legs in two boats although he has left a puzzle in the small political history of the very small Coorg which was sacrificed to human inadequacies like greed for power and greed for money and greed for what? Of course, now everything is fine everywhere. (Refer to pages 105 to 109 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Poovayya Codanda :—He was one of the first batch of pleaders of the end of the last century. He was known more through his talented daughters who made a mark in the Indian dance in the nineteen twenties. One of them Bollamma, served as a Principal of the Lady Students' College, Allahabad, for a number of years till about 1955. (Refer to Page 192 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Poovayya Kumbera :—He is a federal service commission (F. C. S.,) candidate who came out successfully in the early forties in the open competition, and it could be said that Povayya was the first among the Kodavas to come up in an all India contest like that, although a few of the young Kodava candidates had attempted to do the Indian civil service tests in the past. Poovayya is currently one of the chief officials at the Western Railway at Bombay.

Poovayya Pattada :—He renounced everything and took to spiritual and religious life when he was still young, and became the renowned Swami Deshikananda. After undergoing through the ordeals allotted to the monks, he served

in various religious centres and the Ramakrishna Mutts of the country. (Refer to page 188 of "A Tiny Model State")

Seethamma Kodandera Mrs. :—Daughter of Rai Bahadur Somayya, she was married to Kodandera Thimmayya. She and her sisters had the distinction of securing high recognition in painting and music, and their works were exhibited in Madras as early as 1890. Seethamma was also a significant public worker of her time and she moved amongst the British and the Indians alike. In recognition of her social service, the Government honoured her by awarding the Kaiser-i-Hind medal in about 1930. She died in 1944 at her 'Sunny-Side' residence. (Refer to Page 192 of "Tiny Model State.")

Seethamma Apparanda Dr. (Mrs) :—A daughter of Konganda Achayya and married to Lt.-Gen. Aiappa, she was always on the top of the list of the successful candidates in all her University examinations at Calcutta, Bombay, Lucknow and other places. She secured First Class in her M.B., B.S. examination, and from Madras University alone she has fetched fourteen medals. During her studies in England, she obtained seven prizes and also the Queen Elizabeth Gold Medal in 1941. She has visited Europe and America and she is one of the highly qualified Indian ladies today with M.S., D.G.O., F.R.C.S., and other diplomas. She has worked as a senior surgeon in several hospitals including the Lady Hardinge Hospital, New Delhi. Her sister Kamala, a professor, is also an equally accomplished lady academically.

Somayya Alamunda :—He was the first Kodava to get converted to Christianity in the last century under the

influence of the German missionary, Rev. Moegling. After that he was called Stephnaas Somayya. In those days that sort of conversions were considered as "emancipation of slaves," and group of such converted Christians settled at Alamanda house and its vicinity at Beppunad. It was said that all those neo-Christians gathered at 'Alamanda' in Arameri village and "they formed the nucleus of an interesting rising Christian village." Somayya's descendants were later fed by the Basel Mission Society of Mangalore, and some of them settled at Anandpur, near Ammathi. (Refer to Page 293 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Somayya Biddanda :—Syr Karyakar Somayya was the son of the famous Bopu of the end of the 18th century. Like his father, Somayya too was very faithful to the Raja, and after the last Raja was deposed and exiled, Syr Karyakar Somayya accompanied the fallen Raja up to Benares (Kashi) and saw to the Raja's safe settlement there, and then returned to Coorg with ample presents from his chief. That was indeed a rare type of loyalty, though misplaced it was. Somayya wrote in November 1875 that after his death his remains should be interned within the precincts of the Rajas' tombs in Mercara. The Government granted his wishes with a remark that the privilege was limited to Somayya alone and not to anybody else of his family. Somayya died in 1879, exactly 92 years back. (Refer to Page 62 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Somayya Cheppudira :—Son of Rai Bahadur Subbayya, Somayya was a leading coffee planter and a leading public figure. He is best known by his generous contribution of Rs. 15,000 to the Mercara Water Works in 1895. He also enjoyed the highest amount of political pension that came

down from the days of his great grand fathers. The 'Sunny-Side' residence was built by him. He was honoured with the title of Rai Bahadur in 1902 for his public services.

Subbayya Cheppudira :—A renowned officer of the Coorg Government from about 1855, Rai Bahadur Subbayya held for a long time the highest position that was allowed to the natives of the time. He was promoted to the post of the First Assistant Commissioner in 1884 but died after a few months in October of that year. As the 2nd Superintendent of Coorg, Subbayya was the first signatory to the memorandum dated the 17th October 1865 on the founding of the School Endowment Fund. It seemed that they had chosen the auspicious Kaveri Sankramana Day for the purpose of signing such an important document.

Subbayya Cheppudira Brig. :—He was an officer in the British India State's Army for a long time and retired as a Brigadier in 1949. After that he served as a deputy Inspector-General of Police at Hyderabad for some time. His son Sq.-Leader Subbayya was one of the winners of the Vira Chakra award for his out-standing services. (Refer to Page 273 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Subbayya Lychettira :—A lawyer to begin with, and a member of the local legislative Council for a term, Subbayya was interested in politics also, but with no definite political views of his own. He, however, supported those who advocated the merger of Coorg for personal reasons. He was a Munsiff Magistrate in Mercara for quite a few years, acted as District Judge for some time, held some post-war jobs after 1946, and then became an Assistant Commissioner and District Magistrate, in 1951; the last Kodava to hold the post. When the party that

advocated merger of Coorg came to power after the general elections of 1952, their obvious choice for the post of Assistant Commissioner, and, later as the Chief Secretary of the Government from 1954, was Subbayya. When the dream of those amalgamationists became a reality in November 1956 with the merger of Coorg to Mysore, they left Subbayya in Coorg to continue in the new post of deputy Commissioner of this new district of the new State of Mysore. Subbayya was in service till 1959. He died in 1965.

Thangamma Kithianda Dr. (Mrs.):—Daughter of Kodandera Chengappa and married to Col. Kithianda Ganapathy who is a winner of the Military Cross, Thangamma was in Madras University, and she was the only M.D. from Coorg. She is also a Fulbright Scholar in Medicine of the University of Philadelphia. She was a lecturer in Paediatrics in Agra, Delhi and other Universities. (Refer to Page 188 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Thimmayya Cheppudira:—A dynamic personality of the last century, Thimmayya served for a long time as Subedar, and it was a rare honour for a Subedar to have been known by the title of Rao Bahadur that was conferred on Thimmayya in 1892 mainly for his outstanding public service. He donated liberally for various causes and built many buildings for public use like Virarajpet Club buildings, some school buildings etc. He retired from service in 1894 with a special pension and his name resounded for many years even after his death.

Thimmayya Kodandera General:—Gen. Subbayyas Thimmayya need not find a special reference in this work. Born in 1906, educated in Coonoor and Bishop Cotton's

at Bangalore, the Dehra Dun Military Academy and later at Sandhurst, England, Thimmayya joined service in 1926. A soldier of outstanding ability, he earned his name and fame during the Burmese wars in 1944, and later at the Kashmir war. His finest hour came when he was appointed as the Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea in 1953. He became the Chief of the Army Staff in 1957 and retired in 1961. He was involved in a controversy in 1959 which led to his resignation and which he withdrew subsequently. In 1964, Thimmayya had another United Nations assignment as Commander of the U. N. Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus, where he died in 1965. His body was brought to India and was buried in Bangalore with full military honours and with the world-wide tribute as a great soldier and peace-maker. (Refer to Chapter 31 of "A Tiny Model State of S. India.")

Uthappa Kodira :—An old graduate of Madras University, Uthappa started his career as a teacher in ^{Vivapur} ~~Mercara~~, and then plunged into the revenue department as Parpathigar and later as Subedar. In 1938, he was appointed as the District Superintendent of Police and in 1941 as the Assistant Commissioner & District Magistrate. He was given the title of Rao Bhadur in 1943. Uthappa is known for his orthodox ways and simplicity, and as an officer and as a leading official member of the Coorg legislative Council, he was popular than all his predecessors and contemporaries in office. The site of the building of the Kodava Samaja at Mercara should be credited to Uthappa's influence and fore-thought. He retired from service in 1949 and then became a leading coffee planter. He has

also done considerable public work and his contribution in cash and service to various causes, especially the Kodava Education Fund, was substantial. Centenarians in Coorg and among the Kodavas are rare, but Uthappa was a proud son to see his father Thammayya becoming a Centenarian in June 1969 and the old man was justly honoured by a number of his admiring younger men including General Kariappa. Thammayya died in January 1970 in his 101st year".

Uthappa Nayakanda:—He was a Nayak of Beppunad during the time of the Raja Doddavirappa of Coorg. When the Mysore army of Chikadeva Raja entered Coorg, the Kodavas drove them after a battle, but Uthappa or Utha Nayak, as he was then called, was against the Coorg Raja. Therefore, Kote Viravarma of Malabar, with Uthappa's help, entered Coorg through Heggala. In the war that ensued, the Coorg Raja defeated Viravarma, and, as a result, Uthappa ran to Achu Nayak of Anjigerinad for shelter. After some time, he left for Bythur and died there. Utha Nayak's is another instance to show that the Kodavas had not at all reconciled to the Jangamas ruling over them. Uthappa's descendants came back to Beppunad after some years and settled in their ancestral land, with the family being called by the name Nayakanda, because they hailed from the family of the Nayak. There are a few legends concerning to Uthappa's life in recognition of his prowess. (Refer to Page 32 of "A Tiny Model State.")

Uthayya Mandira:—He was one of the trusted lieutenants of the last Raja of Coorg. When the Raja was exiled, Uthayya along with Cheppudira Ponnappa, Biddanda Somayya and others, followed the Raja, some up to

Mysore, some to Bangalore and some others like Somayya even up to Kashi. These men were all busy in burrying secretly the Raja's treasure at some places on the way because of the heavy weight of the Raja's palanquin. But this secret did not remain a secret for long as there were many unfaithful men in the group and Uthayya was one who revealed to the British in May 1834 about the Raja's burried treasure. Secondly, after two years in 1836-37, this same Uthayya was known to have taken active part in quelling the Kanara rebellion under the leadership of Dewn Bopanna.

Uthayya Pattada :—He was the second senior trained graduate teacher among the Kodavas. He joined service in 1918. As deputy Inspector of Schools in 1924, headmaster of Virarajpet and Mercara High Schools from 1928, and as District Education Officer in 1943, Uthayya showed himself as an outspoken educationist, strict disciplinarian, a stout defender of the oppressed and above all as a profound lover of culture. He retired from service in 1948. After his retirement, he served as an ardent public worker, a municipal counsellor, legislator, cooperator and so on. He was a bold man who "did his duty as he saw it." Uthayya died in 1964 and a memorial fund was instituted in his honour with an aim of improving sport in Coorg to which he gave his best. A small book has been brought out about him and that gives a vivid account of his colourful life.

42. THE KODAVAS-SOME HISTORICAL LANDMARKS

The below information about the Kodavas in a chronological order would be of some use of reference value, and, that is as under :

1. 1174 A. D. The first known reference to the Kodavas "of all Nads" fighting in a battle, was made in the Palpare inscriptions of Coorg, of the 12th century.

2. 1316 A. D. : The name of a Kodava Commander, Madayya or Madappa, is found mentioned in the Hoysala inscriptions of the 14th century.

3. 1450 A. D. : The great Kannada poet. 'Kumara Vyasa' referred to the Kodavas in his monumental Mahabharata of the 15th century.

4. 1612 A. D. : In the inscriptions and records of the old Mysore State of the 17th century, several references were made to the Kodavas and their warfare

5. 1736 : The first Kodava to go to the Malabar coast was Bonira Muthanna who led an expedition against the local chiefs of the coastal regions.

6. 1763. : After Hyder Ali's first successful expedition to Coorg, Chonira Cheramana was sent as an ambassador to Hyder's court at Srirangapatna.

7. 1774 : Hyder Ali ordered his men to have compunction and see that decapitation ceased, after he saw the "finest forms" of the "comely heads" of the Kodavas.

8. 1784 : The Kodava warriors and headmen considered for the first time to seek the support of the British to put down Tippu. (The Coorg Raja was then a prisoner of Tippu).

9. 1790 : After the Treaty of Tellicherry, Coorg

became a British territory with the Raja as a feudatory chief.

10. 1799 : Biddanda Bopayya who took part in the wars at the Coorg frontiers against Tippu's men, was later sent to Tulunad on an expedition and he was the first Kodava to go as far as Mangalore.

11. 1809 : The first Kodava to go as far as Madras as an emissary of Coorg, to the Governor-General Lord Minto, was Subedar Muthanna. (His family name is not known).

12. 1816 : Mukkatira Iypanna became a Lingayat with the name Chennabasappa, and married Lingaraja's daughter whose mother was a daughter of Palanganda Appanna of Murnad.

13. 1834 : Mukkatira Iypanna's intrigues with the last Raja, his brother-in-law, led to the annexation of Coorg. The Raja was deposed and exiled.

14. 1835 : The first Kodava to go to Kashi and North India, was Biddanda Somayya who had accompanied the Raja and a few others. Somayya returned and died in 1879.

15. 1837 : The revolt organised by the non-Kodavas of Mysore and South Kanara against the Kodavas and the British, was quelled by the Kodavas "of all Nads" as said above, under the leadership of Apparanda Bopanna, Mathanda Appacha and others.

16. 1852 : The last Raja left for England from Kashi and he was the first Indian chief to do so. He fought his case with the British Government but failed. He died in London in 1859, and his daughter who had married an Englishman, John Campbell, died in 1864.

17. 1855: Mercara Central School was upgraded, and the only student who was admitted into the newly opened higher class, was Koluvanda Kariappa.

18. 1857: The Kodavas stood guard at the Mysore, Mangalore and Malabar boundary posts against the outsiders during the Great Mutiny. Their services were rewarded with their being exempted from the Arms Act of 1861.

19. 1863: The Kodavas submit a "Great Petition to the Government requesting to arrange to impart English education to their children. The Coorg Plantation and Endowment Fund was founded with an initial collection of Rs. 7,500 and lands. An amount of Rs. 11,000 was also collected towards the Mercara School buildings.

20. 1869: Virarajpet English School was founded. Its first headmaster was Palekanda Iyanna who later became the first Inspector of primary schools.

21. 1871: The first batch of students from Coorg appear to the Matric examinations in Bangalore. Codanda Madayya was one of the first two. A teacher's training school was also founded in Mercara by Rev. G. Richter.

22. 1875: The first Kodava to go England, was Mathanda Chengappa who along with Codanda Madayya, was the first F. A. scholar in Coorg. He returned from Cambridge soon due to illness.

23. 1879: The first L. M. & S., and winner of the Hobart award for distinction, was Dr. Koravanda Appayya. He was also the first author among the Kodavas, of a couple of small books.

24. 1881: Matriculation examination began to be held in Mercara (till then it was held in Bangalore or

Mangalore). Out of the first batch of eight candidates, Chendrimada Appayya and Pandanda Belliappa passed in first class, and so they did in their F. A., also. Appayya stood first in his B.A. examination and obtained Ripon Gold Medal and other awards.

25. 1883 : The first Forest officer and Conservator of Forests among the Kodavas, was Manyapanda Muthanna.

26. 1885 : The first B.A., as well as B.L., graduate in Coorg, who later on became a Munsiff, sub-Judge etc, was Kambiranda Nanjappa.

27. 1885 : The first Kodava girl to pass the lower Secondary examination, was Bollamma. Her family name is not clear-some say that she belonged to Palekanda and some as Mandepanda).

28. 1888 : Pandanda Bopayya was the first known sportsman and 'an all-rounder' while he was at the Madras Christian College. He was also a college captain and a winner of many awards.

29. 1891 : The first Kodava in Western India, as a student in the Poona Engineering College, and the first Kodava Engineer, Kongettira Ponnappa.

30. 1894 : The first trained graduate teacher among the Kodavas : Mandepanda Chinnappa.

31. 1895 : One Belliappa (family not known) who was a Munsiff in 1885-90, acted as District Magistrate when the then European officer had been on short leave.

32. 1899 : Ketolira Chengappa who became the first permanent district magistrate in 1922, and 21 years later as Chief Commissioner, joined service as a Parpathigar.

33. 1911 : Mukkatira Iyappa erected the Clock Tower in Virarajpet.

34. 1914 : The first batch of Kodava soldiers to go to Middle-East countries during the first World War. Matharanda Biddayya, the gymnastics teacher at Mercara, was one among them.

35. 1915 : The first Kodava Medical officer in the Indian Army in the rank of a colonel, and a winner of Military Cross, Codanda Ganapathy.

36. 1916 : The first Kodava to go to Japan for some industrial training, Biddanda Karumbayya.

37. 1917 : The first to go to America for some mechanical training : Codanda Kariappa.

38. 1918 : The first Kodava to go to Egypt and East African countries : Codanda Poovayya.

39. 1918 : The first Master of Arts (M.A.), among the Kodavas, Biddanda Kuttappa in Madras.

40. 1920 : The first man from Coorg to go to Malaya and Singapore : Biddanda Bhimayya.

41. 1926 : The first M.B.B.S., graduate among the Kodavas, Miss (Dr.) Konganda Akkamma.

42. 1930 : The first two Kodava Congressmen to court arrest during the freedom movement, were Pandianda Belliappa and Kolimada Karumbayya.

43. 1935 : Ketolira Chengappa who had earned the title of 'Dewan Bahadur,' was appointed Commissioner of Coorg. Later in 1943, he became the first Indian Chief Commissioner.

44. 1941 : An M.B.B.S., of Indian Universities with high academic distinctions, and then an M.S., F.R.C.S, etc. of foreign Universities, with several awards, was Konganda Seethamma, later Mrs. Apparanda Iyappa.

45. 1943 : Kumbera Poovayya, now a Divisional

Superintendent of the Western Railway, passed the Federal Service Commission examination.

46. 1944: Kodandera Kariappa became the first Indian Brigadier, Indian Army.

47. 1945: Kodandera Thimmayya was appointed a Brigadier with hir winning a Distinguished Service Order.

48. 1946: Cheppudira Poonacha was elected to represent Coorg at the Constituent Assembly of India, and when Coorg became a Part C State in 1952, he was the Chief Minister, and after the merger of Coorg into Mysore, he became a Minister in Mysore and at the Central Government in 1966.

49. 1947: Pemmanda Monnappa appointed as Inspector-General of Police, first at Madras, then at Andhra and later of the Mysore State.

50. 1947: Kodandera Madappa, new Director-General of Shipping, became the first among the Kodava officers of the Indian Administrative Service and he was the first Kodava to go to Russia in 1959 with an official delegation.

51. 1948: Palekanda Medappa who was the Judge of the Mysore High Court, was appointed the Chief Justice of the old Mysore State.

52. 1949: Chonira B. Muthamma was the first lady from Coorg as well as India to pass with high distinction in the Indian Administrative Service examinations, and later to work in the External Affairs Ministry, Government of India.

53. 1949: Kodandera Kariappa appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, and later in 1953, he became the High Commissioner of India in Australia and

New Zealand, the first from Coorg to go to that part of the world.

54. 1953 : Kodandera Thimmayya was appointed Chairman of the N.N R.C in Korea. He became the Chief of Army Staff in 1957 and then the U.N. Commander of the Peace Force at Cyprus in 1964.

55. 1954 : Apparanda Iyappa of the Army Signal Corps, was appointed a Brigadier, and he became a Major-General in 1958 and Lieutenant-General in 1965.

56. 1954 : Kollimada Karumbayya was nominated to represent Coorg at the Rajya Sabha (the Council of State) for a term of two years.

57 : 1956 : Coorg was merged into Karnataka in November 1956. and from then on it was a district of the State of Mysore.

* * * *

The above list is given just as a guidance, and to show how some people distinguished themselves in various fields. I am aware that some names have been left out here, and, it is not because of their achievements were of minor importance, but only to minimise my statement of facts on these pages. After 1956, several young men have come up with brilliant records, and all that would be for the future writers, I hope, to collect and record, if they wish it to be so.

43. THE KODAVAS CERTAINLY STAND UNRIVALLED

The above names are just a directory, and, one should also note that there have been many 'unknown soldiers'

among them. A good many of these people are in the top of the All India list and they include soldiers, administrators, doctors, sportsmen and others. Some names have been left out in this work to avoid repetition. Anyway, what an enviable record of a race of just about 75,000? Where in India or in the world one could get such a small community with such a record of national endeavours and importance?

Well, that's one side of the picture. But there are also, as it should be, snakes, scorpions, rats, mice, figs and twigs. In the one and the same jungle owls and nightingales, tigers and deers, elephants and leapords, all live together but they might try to keep apart from one another. So also the human beings like Boggu, Jaggu, Guggu, Subbu, Kalu, Balu, Ayyu and all others live together, and they are all mixed up. Yes, miserably mixed up, and that is what we call a society.

From the time of Lord Cornwallis to that of Lord Irwin, for over a century and a quarter, the Kodavas earned glowing tributes from the British statesmen of great eminence. The Kodavas were a "rude warriors" right from the twelfth century, according to the records, and the fact that they never fought for any reward in those days, is the thing that makes their history colourful. For two hundred years they fought against the Malayalee infiltration from the west and that of the Mysoreans in the east, especially during the time of Hyder and Tippu, and that was no ordinary fight. They fought for their 'country' or their 'home' and not for rewards, and that indeed was an exceptional case in the whole of India. It was for that the British gave ample opportunities and

privileges for the Kodavas "as recompense for their manifold services". The Kodavas told the British after they put down the Kanara rebellion of 1837, that :—

"We Kodavas do not require pay because it is our duty which we owe to our 'country' to secure its tranquility....."

I have already said about that colourful personality and a great warrior, Apparanda Bopanna. The British Government offered some cash awards to him which he richly deserved. But he wrote to the Collector Lewin of Mangalore on the 5th May 1857 stating that :—

"If the money is accepted, the exertions which we have made, the good name of the country and the reputation which we may acquire for our conduct would be altogether sunk. Under these circumstances, I beg to be excused from accepting the reward."

Every word of what is said above was meant by them and they acted accordingly. Capt. Robert Cole in his book on Coorg and later, the 'Cyclopaedia of India' the 1885 edition, gave an account of the whole thing in these words :—

"In 1837, there was a rebellion in the district of Kanara. The Kodavs at once marched there, quelled the rebellion, and recaptured for the British, the treasures carried off by the insurgents. The Governor-General directed that the recovered treasure should, as a reward, be divided amongst the Coorgs, but they to a man refused to receive it, and proudly declared that they had not fought for loot. The British Government awakened to a sense of the spirit of

these rude warriors, then directed Jaghir and Umbli lands to be conferred on them and presented their Chiefs with horses, rifles, khillats and other marks of honour. Later still when British supremacy in India had been shaken to its foundation in 1857, a body of Kodavas, armed to the teeth, suddenly made their appearance at Peryapatna under the secret instructions of the late Sir Mark Cubbon, and by their presence tended to suppress the growing insolence and disaffection of the Muslim classes of Srirangapatna and the adjacent parts of that province."

The very first report that was written about Coorg after making a thorough study of the land and the people, was the one by Robert Taylor, Commissioner in Malabar, who was the first European officer to visit Coorg in 1790. He stayed for some time at Nalknad with the Raja. That was exactly 180 years back. It was he who found for the first time the people of this small place quite different from the rest of the Indians. After him came the first Resident at the Raja's Court, Capt Dennis Mahoney. He happened to be the first historian of Coorg. His notes on Coorg was the first of its kind of 1798 in which he called the people "a distinct race." Long after this, it should be noted, the 'Rajendraname' was got written by the Raja in 1807 but that is merely a version of the Raja about the affairs of his days.

Anyway it was those 'distinct' features of the people, and their welfare, gallantry, conduct etc made an English officer exclaim in 1837 after the Kanara rebellion, stating that, "It is however a question why our troops could not do what the Kodavas have done." Yes, what the Kodavas had

done, no one and nowhere in India did. Their sense of nationalism, social solidarity, cultural entity etc were of a splendid type and it was no ordinary spirit of sacrifice they had shown in those days, and that was why they stood out as a distinct group of people, though very small in number.

This is a great tradition of more than 500 years though records about their heroic exploits go back to the twelfth century. Bonira Muthanna (1735), Chonira Gheramana (1763) Kannanda Doddappa (1774), Kulletira Ponnanna (1787), Biddanda Bopappa (1799), Chowrira Appanna (1812), Mathanda Appacha (1834), Apparanda Bopanna (1837) and many others already listed above were no ordinary people. They gave their best to Coorg and the Kodavas. Of course, there were, and there are, many blacklegs, and that is inevitable.

From 1837 to 1857, and then again till 1917, for sixty long years, the Kodavas failed to get any opportunity to show their native talents although during this period, they acquired modern education and most of them became successful civil servants and some among them rose up to high positions both in and outside Coorg. Men like Mathanda Appachanna (1863), Codanda Madappa (1900), Manyapanda Muthanna (1910), Ketolira Chengappa (1930) and many others were efficient administrators, ardent nationalists and sincere lovers of their culture and tradition. These gentlemen were frequently honoured both by the Government as well as people for their loyalty, integrity and public service.

When the first World War was on, a scheme for the Indianization of the Indian Army was prepared in India.

No one had then felt that the Kodavas were getting a new opportunity even though a good number of men from Coorg were enlisted as SEPOYS during the war-time in 1914-18. However, when the state-wise recruitment of youngmen as commissioned officers took place, Coorg through it was very small province, sent two boys, one of whom consequently became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of free India. Here it should be mentioned about the role of Sir Henry Cobb who was then the Chief Commissioner of Coorg. It was his direct intervention that facilitated the selection of the two Kodava boys. Sir Cobb's service in Coorg was timely because he had known more about Coorg and her people than anybody else as he was the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner at Bangalore about eighteen years prior to that in 1890-95.

Now, however, due to the modern developments, and, perhaps, on account of the economic upheavals, and due to the scramble for some kind of position and authority, rivalry, jealousy and things relating to all those evils, a sort of degradation has set in everywhere. In Coorg it is more in evidence because of the smallness of the Community which now seems to be disintegrating. There is a decline of moral, cultural and ethical values and that is disgusting and disgraceful as well. In his illuminating article in the Blackwood Magazine of November 1922, Hilton Brown had already given expression to all that very clearly. He said that :

* There is just one disconcerting feature about the Coorgs-their ready willingness to be dominated by the outsider. If an Apparanda, or a Kodandera or a Nadikerianda or any other of the fine old Coorg

families should chance to read this, he will probably buckle on his Odi Kathi and set out for my blood. For, the Kodavas' profession is all to contrary, but the fact remains - - the Brahmin is unquestionably an outsider to the Coorg social system ; yet he has warmed himself..... It is the same thing with the political agitator; I have seen and heard a fourth rate Madrassi Vakil talk over an assembly of Kodavas, any of whom was worth a dozen of him. But they (Kodavas) give in and were dominated ; he (the out-sider) opened his mouth and they (Kodavas) were dumb.....He (a Kodava) won't think for himself."

In continuation Hilton Brown runs wild with his description of Coorg and the Kodava traits. He says that :—

"There are many non-Kodavas, Moplahs, Gowdas, Brahmins and others . but they do not really matter ; it is the Kodavas who count.

"If the Kodava male is the Scottish highlander of South India, his women folk are beyond question its Parisiennes. You will see jacket and saree arranged in colour scheme of honey, amber and purple, rose and grey, with the most faultless taste, all crowned with the flowing veil that lends beauty to any head "

Hilton Brown is at his best when he describes things pertaining to the Nalknad palace. He said that ;—

"To get the heart of real Coorg you must penetrate to the other place—the old grim palace of Nalknad..... You will crack your head a dozen times a day, for the ceilings were made for little people and the doors are

but forehead high. That is a tragic little place – it is only a biggish house really, though tradition dignifies it with the title of 'Palace', and its dark rooms and crudely painted walls could tell some strange stories..... ”

“ It was here that Viraraja the Elder married that cherished wife whose death drove him mad with grief ; you may still see in front of the palace the little stucco pavilion where he and she together sat upon that happy day. And by an evil sequence of history it was here that the children of his favourite daughter, for whom he had made so many plans, were murdered and thrown into a pit at the bidding of his nephew, Viraraja the Younger. It was in front of this quite unassuming little house on the day after that monstrous deed that Viraraja and his Dewan walked together discussing whether the unfortunate wretches who had carried out the work (the Kudiya) should not also be despatched and cast into the pit before it was closed. A grim place and of tragic memories, and surely if ever ghosts walk, it should be here. Yet it is a place of serene beauty, nestling under the pedestal of the highest hill in Coorg, surrounded by sweetly running mountain burns and in the spring time of the year docked out with a profusion of coloured foliage that captures the eye in sheer delight. It is ill to believe that such sad things could have happened here. But that is Coorg again, as has already been said ; a chequered past illuminated by glorious deeds, but blotted by hideous stories of evil, by memories of men bad or mad.....

“A comparison of Coorg with Scotland is really almost inevitable.....Both have grand and regal highlands with a sturdy mountain dwelling race; both have lowlands attachedBoth are rich in music, dance, folklore and folk-songs, in hearts ready for hospitality and hands ready for sword

“That is Coorg.....the beauty clouded with the melancholy of old stories, the great past stained with blood inhumanly split.”

That was how a good number of Europeans gave their impressions about the place and the people. I don't want to repeat all that was said already in my earlier work. I may state only one thing. The elders of centuries back had built, nourished and fostered a society and community through all kinds of religious and ethical codes and that took centuries to develop. This is the truth about all the well-developed castes and systems everywhere. Well, what's the fun in people today in deliberately trying to cut at the very root of such a system by misleading theories? One could understand the rich and the unprincipled and yet well-placed 'gentlemen' of the society betraying their ignorance and violating the ethical values. But that can't be so always and in every case and by everyone.

After all, the history of Coorg till 1956, was the history of Coorgs or the Kodavas. The ancient Rajas were there mainly on the pleasure of the Kodavas. Viraraja the Elder would not have been there if the Kodavas had not rescued him from Tipu's prison. That ungrateful wretch, Lingaraja II, would not have been in power if the man whom he treacherously punished, Chowrira Appanna,

had not helped him. The last Raja would not have been deposed and exiled if Apparanda Bopanna and other Kodavas had not turned against him. The British rule in Coorg was founded upon the willing cooperation and approval of the Kodavas who desperately yearned for a change. And it was for that they refused to accept any rewards from the British although what was rewarded to them like land, money, medals, horses, and, even the exemption from the Arms Act, were all forced upon them as the alien Government saw that these people had richly deserved all those things.

Why this foreign dominance all the time is a thing that could be due to the basic weakness of human nature. A small community is incapable of surviving unitedly, especially in politics. In fact, that is the fate of all groups, classes and clans all over. Mutual bickerings and betrayal are an every day affair especially when it is a fight for power.

Yes, this is a rocket age ; but what has the man who has no means to buy even a bullet or a bullock cart to do with the blessed rockets and sputnicks ? The God in man is disappearing and the man is running amuck for sheer survival, and those who can comfortably survive, are out and out greedy for riches of various kinds. In the process, the traditions and the age-old cultural and ethical values of life are the worst casualties, and it is hoped that some miracle might happen somewhere and avert such a thing from happening more and more.

Politics is a vicious game which leads the countries to disastrous ends. In Coorg too, a very small place to have had any such thing, had happened things that hastened

the death of a State in four years, seven months and ten days, in 1956. That virus of personal and traditional bickerings were added by the increased dosage of importation of the people from Malabar at that time just in order 'to spite the face' of some opponents of some politicians, now seem to be reacting favourably with the increased number of Malayalees in Coorg, and this small district would one day become a bone of contention among the two linguistic groups of South India. In the meantime the little race of Kodavas seem to be scattering far and near, and from their highlands down fast the lowlands of Mysore, Bangalore and elsewhere.

PART V

" MYSELF "

44. I SAW THE FIVE DECADES OF CHANGES

Character or behaviour is not always a hereditary trait. I am sure it is borne out of some *Samskaara* of the previous birth or births. There have been good parents with bad children and vice versa. It is a fact however that in many cases children imbibe parental qualities, and that is partly due to heredity. Whatever that may be, character is just an off-shoot of *Samskaara*, and, indeed, that's how I look upon things about myself. I personally wouldn't fit into anyone else's behaviour, and, indeed, I was my own in my tastes, habits and outlook.

For me the life and environment in which I lived, have been in schools and in groups throughout, and yet I was my own all along unlike others. I could get nothing precious from life and the series of incidents that I went through have been a saga of betrayals by people, and, on the whole, all that was absolutely nonsense. Nothing precious I could get from any quarter.

The entire life of mine has been a tremendous uphill task. As a boy of 14, I wrote an essay in Kannada entitled " Is There God ? ". I placed it on the table of my father so that I could know his views on that. He read it and then said that my arguments were obsolete and asserted that there was God.

But then that was an empty assertion. He did not know all about the mystery of God. Like many others of his age and times, he thought that God could be bought by a sort of horse-trading. As there were then and even now I came across a good number of saffron robed hypocrites also in those days, who misunderstood and misinterpreted God. More vicious and deep a man was, the more often he spoke of God to cover his own hidden designs, and those were the people, though not all, I had found in a large number.

The Nineteen-twenties could be said as a post-war period after the first world war that had ended in 1918. In those days a matric educated man was considered as a highly educated one and a graduate as a heaven-born one. I remember people standing at the street corners and pointing out to a man stating that he had done his matriculation, and had found out a job in the Government office. Among the local men there were hardly a score of graduates in those days. Almost all those who had acquired modern education had taken to Government services both in and outside Coorg, and the common people were living in a rut. A few primary and middle-school educated people were speaking and writing a good English.

Nevertheless, the 1920-s were the meeting point of the old and the new practices and precepts. The Kodavas began to modernise their costumes and by 1920, they had removed their turbans and closely buttoned coats, and took to European dress. The Europeans apart, only half a dozen natives had owned cars. A few of the old tonga carts were still in operation among the richer folk.

As a five or six-year old boy, I could notice the trans-

portation difficulties. There were only six or eight buses in the whole of Coorg and they were just introduced. My first journey by bus was an awful experience. I remember that I vomitted over and over again as the bus was loaded mostly with the petrol cans than with the people. The body of the bus was in the shape of a condemned truck. I was put into the school in Mercara straightway and I thought that the world about which the people spoke was after all that between my home in Pollibetta and my school in Mercara. I was put into a wrong class and thus it was a wrong beginning to an otherwise a normal student.

The life was no doubt enjoyable and the money had its own value despite the impending depression. I remember going with the elder boys to Kongappayya's hotel in Mercara where a large plateful of sweets of various kinds used to be served just for 12 Ps, a nice meal for 16 Ps. and so on. Every piece of coin had its own value and an old one pie coin would get two-pocket full of peanuts, groundnuts or some such thing.

When I was eight or nine, I remember to have walked 22 miles from Mercara with the elder boys and the legs were moving fast without my being aware of it because it was an occasion of home-going to spend the vacation. A month's absence from home seemed like a year's parting and the hostel life in those days was a life of ordeal, and in respect of food, it was in no way better than what was served to the C class prisoners. But I appreciated the discipline aspect of the hostel life later on, though as a kid, I used to get scared by the shoutings of Matharanda Biddayya, the Resident teacher, who, of course, used to ignore me as he knew that I was the smallest and the

youngest among about 85 boarders of the time.

I had heard the name of Gandhiji in the 1920-s, but I took him to have been a great criminal because his name would come up mostly in connection with his arrest, and I was thinking that he had his abode somewhere in the Coorg jungles most of which have now been replaced by coffee estates. The coffee estates around Mercara that had belonged to Henry Mann, Donald Stewart, Hunter and others had already disappeared by that time and there were only the lovely silver oaks and eucalyptus trees left all over.

My family, the Iychettira, has been known at least for over 250 years, and originally it had its settlement in Kiggatnad. Their later migration to Beppunad, about six miles from Virarajpet, seemed to have been in search of a better place, and they found an impressive colony of beautiful environs on the banks of the Kaveri. They pitched their tent on a fine hillock where they built an impressive structure with considerable architectural approach right from the tank below to the family house at the top. Originally the family seemed to have been a prosperous one considering the extensive acreage of their land, both dry and wet. My father used to say that in his time the whole house and its environs were full with hundreds of people, all living harmoniously together with the eldest man controlling the entire business as was the custom in those days. But, of course, those were the old days.

The Pudiyodi worship, a characteristic feature of this family is of 200 years of an unbroken record. That is a colourful spectacle of the deity with the spirit of the goddess Kali or Parvati. The ritual is impressive especially when

she makes her appearance at dawn with flames around her expressing her fiery ordeal and power of endurance. It is certainly expressive of divine splendour, and the moment of her appearance is breathtaking, and, of course, all that would be just for a moment.

As a youngster in 1920-s, I remember the days of heavy rains in Coorg and continuous downpour especially in Mercara and at the Ghat areas. But these rains seemed to be not so torrential in later years, and they say that because of the devastation of forests. That is true also.

In 1930-s as a school boy, I used to work very enthusiastically in the wetlands during the vacations and all that was just for the fun of it. Getting completely drenched was the hallmark of that pleasure. I used to take delight both in ploughing and transplanting work, and in the latter, I used to even compete with expert labourers but only to fall behind. Thus after a heavy work in the open windy and rainy fields, the hot food specially prepared for a 'hard-working son' by the mother, used to be very tasty. The grub would usually contain green nutritious jungle stuff including fried fish and broiled crab - the latter one perhaps gathered by myself from the wetlands. I held the record of having worked both ploughing and transplanting, in every one of our over eighty small and big pieces of knee-deep slushy paddy fields, and that I did with great gusto almost every year till I was a school student, and sometimes even afterwards. I think that the hard work that I had put up sheer out of pleasure and much against the wishes of my parents, had contributed something good to my not so bad physique in later days.

It was in the 1930-s, that I could see the worst time of

the century, and that was the time of the economic depression all over the world. The agriculturists were the worst sufferers because their meagre productions fetched no value at all. Many coffee estates were found virtually abandoned and the orange gardens rotting after hit by parasites. A cartload of paddy got only Rs 28. Only the Government servants were happy because they had something coming every month, and, therefore, youngmen flocked into Government offices for jobs of some kind or the other.

My secondary education went on normally well despite the pecuniary limitations. My father, like many of his generation, had not taken the future of his and of his family very seriously. He did not evince interest to see that his children did well. After a premature retirement from service, in which he was not quite so successful considering the trends and opportunities of his time, he spent three decades without seeing to his economic stability. No doubt, I was not impressed by this sort of people. He was content with a considerable area of land that fed him and a house that sheltered him. He did not know where the one end of his land began and the other ended, and he did not know also that people around him had already encroached on all sides a good slice of land and all that they did by always smiling at him.

This sort of indifference to affairs like that was an outcome of the 19th century mentality of irresponsibility and a lack of foresight. Many people were like that and only a few industrious fellows cautiously waded through the crisis. Those who spent their time in gossiping and wool-gathering were left behind to be hood-winked.

Nevertheless, the 1930-s made most of the people

aware of their responsibilities. People could no longer live on the past lethargy and inaction. The British Government was in its climax and the administrative efficiency was in its zenith. Corruption and the allied evils in the Government were not at all heard those days as we hear today. Tax-dodgers, crooks and sneaky elements were firmly dealt with and the law spared no one. There was peace and tranquility on one side and poverty and depression on the other. By this time there were about fifteen cars owned by the natives and some more bus services. Some mofussil services had already started even by the beginning of the 1930-s. Electricity and telephone were not at all known but the posts and telegraphic system worked excellently since last 100 years.

At school I failed to come across any inspiring teacher nor could I find in my formative years any helpful or resourceful elders to guide an yearning youth. One Mandepanda Biddayya, a companion of my father but very much unlike the latter, seemed to have been an industrious individual. They used to meet each other very often. Accidentally I happened to be there when he died and his last words that he muttered to me were in his characteristic way to do well and so on the usual terms. I was then 14—

Another gentleman whom I knew for a long time was Biddanda Ayyamma, also an active and energetic man. His attitude towards different people might have been different as far as I could see but I found him interesting, and like all his brothers, scholastic and enterprising. He baffled me by his easy manners and profound learning. He used to recite Tennyson, Byron and even some passages of Shakspeare by heart. Gray's 'Elegy' and many other fine pieces were in his finger tips and so also a good many pieces

of Indian scriptures. He was a hard worker for his own cause and he would go to any length to help one if he felt like it. As far as myself was concerned, I used to enjoy listening to him. Such individuals were all the products of high standard of education of the earlier days.

As the 1940-s dawned, the old high standards had already had its waning effect. Education had become a cheap commodity to acquire a sort of career, and the knowledge and wisdom aspect of education was totally absent even by the 1930-s. The war that had begun in 1939 was raging fiercely in some parts of the world and that certainly had its effects elsewhere, and economically a new era was beginning. The price of the agricultural products slowly rose up and people had begun to make the best of the opportunities. A good number of young men joined the Army and many families were relieved of the economic hardship with which they suffered during the two decades of depression. By this time I had begun to work as a teacher after a staggering start, and I could no more hope to get a shirt for 12 Ps, a coat for 25 Ps, and two-pocket full of peanuts or groundnut just for one Paisa.

By the year 1942, I had already become a teacher at the then prestigious Central High School, Mercara. A young Kodava boy strangely enough became a Kannada teacher with a fully non-Kannada accent and non-Kannada costume, and that was certainly a strange thing in those days, and, perhaps, even now. By 1943, I was wellknown in Mercara, to most of the people in Coorg, and all the top officials of the time, when a couple of them would stop their cars anywhere to offer a lift to me to the dismay of the embarrassed on-lookers, the District Magistrate would shout

from his office, "Hello, orator, how are you?", and a much esteemed Chief Commissioner would discuss with others about "the boy" he simply "loved and admired".

By that time, I had already travelled from Kodlipet to Kutta many times, and I don't remember why. That was how the days were, but that did not mean I had no other problems, which, of course, are said in the later pages. Unlike many rascals, I like to omit the few happier sides of my life, and shall be stressing only the other side in this narrative.

It was in the 1940-s, I came to know the local politicians many of whom as elsewhere, were sheer opportunists, black-mailers and a disgruntled hoard. By 1945, their number increased because they knew that India was on the eve of winning freedom. Anyway, the story of these types of people would make a depressing study and I shall try to deliberately omit here without elaborating about them in this work.

The 1950-s, began with a bang, and then a song about the Part C. State status to Coorg, the festival of general elections, the drama of adult franchise and mock scene of the setup of a responsible Government in Coorg. But the things started with all this fanfare in such a small place soon transformed the people with very few exceptions into timid, irreligious, unreliable, undependable and terror-stricken robots about whom I wrote much elsewhere in this book. All this nonsense was only for a short time of four years and Coorg was no longer there long before the decade was out, and I too disappeared from there.

And as 1960-s, emerged I was no longer in India, and this latest decade was certainly a period of great changes.

I could see that in Coorg too. It was a decade of overthrowing the essential traditional values and of an upsurge of the new values which in effect was nil, both ethically and culturally. Devaluation of rupee and consequent inflation, and yet frustration and despair in many a face, was there as it had always been there. The decade started with great hopes, and, as it ended, the man in the remote corners too could feel the giant-stride the humanity had taken when a couple of them landed on the moon, for the first time, and, in India, the politics took a jumbled form with mouthful of slogans on socialism with which the leaders fed the people.

I have already said in the pages behind that in 1947 on the eve of that tottered and mutilated freedom of the country, I was already a disappointed man, but then I helplessly witnessed the things that went on. During the decades, my humble, and rather a dreamy ideal, was to take the people, especially the nearest ones, along with me as one whole. I had stood by them not sparing my own interests, to express the oneness of the spirit within ourselves as an ideal circle of kinship should be. But it was the most nearer and the closer ones who had betrayed me at every step. More I tried to go near them more ruthlessly and shamelessly they betrayed me and my intentions at every stage and I belonged to that same stock of bastards. Verily as I said in the beginning, character is borne not always of heredity but something greater than that, the *Samskaara*, and in my case, I had always held that it was so.

That apart, here I am tempted to mention the measure of changes that I could see during the last five decades, and the figures given here are based just on a rough estimation

of facts : (Europeans and other outsiders excluded here)

	1920-s	1930-s	1940-s	1950-s	1960-s
Cars	6	15	70	280	550
Bus-lines	8	18	26	46	72
Radios	—	4	125	1500	6500
High Schools	3	3	11	26	44
Tarred Rd.					
(mileage)	30	60	280	320	380
Electricity	—	2%	15%	30%	60%
Paddy cartload	Rs. 28	Rs. 50	Rs. 180	Rs. 380	Rs. 520
Coffee ^{Candy} Maund	„ 50	„ 80	„ 300	„ 500	„ 850

This was the scale of progress concerning only to those of Coorg. Economically the progress has now been manifold and most of the land is now under cultivation leaving very little as reserved lands or as Forest lands. The below chart is concerned to the Kodavas only together with the figures concerning the total population and later influx of the people from outside. The Government census report (*Vide Page 272*) has been a guide only for the total population.

Thus goes on the progress chart of the Kodavas, as I see it. Gradual erosion of the cultural marks is a way of progress for cynics and the ill-informed upstarts, but in the ethical sense of the term that is the hallmark of backwardness. The Kodavas were forced to break up their age-old social system due to economic reasons of competitive nature and their divided settlements and selfish establishments. The possessive nature of the man and his inefficiency to manage things in the interest of one and all led to great deal of dog-fight in almost every family and everywhere. Thus the ancient collectivism gave way to the modern

	1920-s	1930-s	1940-s	1950-s	1960-s
Total Population	1,64,000	1,65,000	1,68,000	2,30,000	4,20,000
The Kodavas	62,000	68,000	73,000	77,000	86,000
Influx of out - siders	8,000	10,000	25,000	1,80,000	95,000
Kodavas in Mysore	120	250	750	1,200	3,000
" in Bangalore	150	300	1,200	3,500	6,000
" in Nilguries,					
Kadur and Wynad	100	250	500	1,800	3,500
" in Bombay	60	150	700	900	1,500
" in the rest of India	300	600	4,000	6,000	8,000
" outside India	25	70	250	300	320
" in Army, Navy etc	15	40	6,000	3,800	3,500
" 'Varsity graduates	35	120	300	600	1,800
Kodava women in					
non-Kodava sarees		1%	2%	4%	30%
One-day Weddings	1%	3%	12%	22%	80%
Just Dampati Muhurtham					
Weddings	—	1%	2%	4%	45%

individualism. More richer the one became, more dishonest, self-centred, inhospitable and crude in outlook he became although among the Kodavās, there may be a very few exceptions to what I say.

With all this, the over-all progress chart of Coorg, nay of India, in the material sense of the term, is far behind most of the other countries of the world, and that was what the latest report of the year 1969, showed. Apart from the economic disparity, our contribution to the world of thought and science, is also little. In the undivided India, the population in 1920-s, was 250 millions, and after five decades, with more than 120 millions gone to form a new country, the population of the vivisected India has come up to about 560 millions. However, excepting the scientific development, for which scientists and scientists alone are responsible, no other form of change is noticeable. But then there is an explosion of information now from all sides together with the explosion of population. That's a good record, indeed !

45. A SNAKE-BITE ON MY FIRST ARTICLE.

I may now be excused if I am forced to say something in a reminiscent mood, and for which, I may state, I am not responsible either. I am not doing anything as Thornton Wilder had put it as "kernel of sense in a world of boasting, self-excuse and rhetoric". This is true in the case of many people who write their autobiographies, but mine is not an effort at that, and, neither have I anything to boast. This is only some recollections of just a purposeless, colourless, useless and worthless life.

I do not yet know how I happened to recollect things like this, which I am doing as shortly and as truthfully as this. I somehow find that sometimes experience is pain but a recollection of the same is certainly a pleasure. Hence I feel to speak out.

A kid of seven or eight years, just out to the world and away from home, is not a pleasant prospect, but then it is life. An old man with a tattered coat and snow-white turban once trekked along the corridors of the Students' hostel in Mercara, when most of the youngsters took him to be just a firewood seller or a dealer with rice to the hostel. That was in about 1928, and the man stretched his hand over my head and muttered, "Child, read well and prosper". . Of course, just those formal words.

Days, months and even years passed for me to know that old man was no other than the first Indian headmaster of the then Central School, and one of the pioneers of the modern Kannada literature, P. Mangesh Rao.

The very first time of my seeing some high class Kannada dramas staged by those great actors of the leading dramatic troupe that were coming from outside Coorg in those days afforded me some stimulating experience. I used to see only the one-fourth of each of those plays, and the rest of the time, I think, I must have spent sleeping inside the tent itself, but then some interesting, thrilling or heartening scenes would suddenly awaken me, and then after a short time, would again go to sleep.

The most spectacular parade that I ever saw in Coorg was in 1929 during the visit of the Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin. I saw only a long volley of cars passing by and I stood wondering somewhere in the crowd that every white

man in every car was a Viceroy. Who else they could be going in cars when those cars were mostly used by those men in those days and with high cocky caps on ?

But the biggest sea of human heads that I first saw was in Virarajpet in 1933, during the visit of Mahatma Gandhi. It was a wonder for me to know that Coorg consisted of so many people. A thing that I still remember is that of an eagle flying over Gandhiji's head in the high skies and taking three rounds and then disappearing as the old man was speaking to the crowd in his usual low voice.

There was nothing else for me to remember. Not yet out of the middle school classes, I did read well, and even wrote poems but no one would call them at least as prose. The one that I wrote at that time and which I had carefully preserved, was included in one of my collection of poems published only three years back. Yes, these little things afford some pleasure to me but it need not be so for others.

The years from 1934 to 1937, were definitely a period when I tried to do some exercise in self-introspection, often alone and very often kept aloof from others, probably dreaming or wool-gathering. What then is the meditation, I don't know.

Those poems of mine, that were just the prose running mad, were sung at some public functions, and I enjoyed when others sang them, and, later I myself began to recite although not effectively, but I did do that before vast audiences. A song composed by me was sung by a friend of mine before a vast and distinguished gathering that included the great Kannada poet D. R. Bendre, who after 30 years in 1965 testified that I was a "talented poet".

It was in 1936, I put all the 700 stanzas of the Bhagavad

Gita into Kannada verse form and in Shatpadi metres. But in Virarajpet I could show it to no one as most of the people there, were those Mapillas who traded in fish and cocoanut. I sent that to Madras to one Devashikamani Alasingrachar, who had brought down the Indian epics into Kannada prose in about 60 volumes. That gentleman acknowledged receipt of my script, read it, reviewed it, and then wrote to me on the 20th February 1937, a below :-

“ I have gone through your poems of the Gita. It is a good effort, but you have to go a long way to succeed. Continue to write. I would suggest you send those poems to ‘ Prabudha Karnataka ’ of Mysore. They might serialise this in their columns allotted to younger writers Wish you all the best.”

What perhaps, Panje Mangesh Rao had never dreamt of the thing that he said to a wayside urchin, Alasingrachar wrote after eight years.

But then, I was not that book-worm ; certainly not. There was something revolutionary in me, and that was not emotion, either. It was some inner urge. That was not in terms of what can be said as passive, but sternly active. It was not like the rest of the 18,000 students of the Coorg schools keeping out of their classrooms in those days, and that won't make matters political. Such a thing was just indiscipline and that could also be law-breaking. That was a mob fury, and the primary school kids too did that. Most of them including myself, never knew what it was all about excepting that one word ‘ Gandhi ’. Apart from that the talk of freedom of the country and all that was just a nightmare, and that was so even for the millions

of elderly people.

While in the senior class, I was elected Secretary of the school union with about 380 votes as against 30 or 40 secured by the two or three opponents of mine. That election and the enthusiastic work that I could turn out afforded me a training ground in organizational work, and, indeed, I did well, and that was what my teachers said. They were right, but it was not only that.

Twice I organised strikes in the school to vindicate the value of self-assertion against the autocratic handling of the situation in the school by the authorities when most of the students joined us and the teachers sympathised. Such a thing had never happened till then in the history of the Coorg schools. It was not like just shouting slogans to the wind to keep the donkeys off the streets and then call it freedom movement.

This was not that. This was an outright refusal to compromise with injustice of the authorities, and, as I said it was the first of the kind in Coorg schools. Suspending me and two other boys from the school for three days, the acting headmaster, in the absence of the headmaster, Pattada Uthayya, wrote to my father on the 22nd November 1937, thus :

"I write this to inform you that the behaviour of your son Muthanna is not satisfactory. He recently took leading part in organising a strike of his class and has consequently been suspended pending further inquiries."

That gentleman did not write the reasons for taking "a leading part in organising a strike" but then everyone knew what it was and everybody else certainly saw what was the

strike for.

That was that. I was never too far at the same time from the extra-curricular activities. In addition to the duties that was entrusted to me, I was there but not so good at the out-door games. Excursions and going up the top of the hills had a special significance for me and I did that many a time.

It was while at the Virarajpet school, I first wrote an article and sent to the Kodagu weekly, and that was published on the 17th September 1937. I had pleaded in that saying that the Keil-Mhurtha festival be celebrated throughout Coorg on the same day instead of celebrating that on different days in different Nads.

I sent that article to the Press, and I was desirous to see my article in print and my name too, but when the article appeared, I found that my name missing from that. It was just mentioned below the article stating that it was by a 'student'.

"Damn that 'student' and the man who put it that way," I thought.

That was certainly the work of a vicious mind in the Press. Why should the editor of a newspaper or any worker there, indulge in such a thing? A school boy would send an article to a paper only to see it himself in print, and not to tell people all that he might say. What he wants to see is his name in print. But what a yellow-eyed newspaper was that which published a school boy's ideas but not his name?

All that, I thought, was due to the people who must have been working there "with no academic qualification as such," perhaps, as machine fitters and compositors.

Though I didn't know any of them there, I felt that it was true.

But my above article earned a reply in the very next week's issue of the Kodagu weekly, and that was by an elderly person, whom I didn't know then and even now. That man did not agree with me and said that it was not advisable to have the Keilmhurtha festival on the same day all over. But one agrees with me or not, I hold on to my views even now after thirty years because modern conditions need that uniformity

Whatever that may be, I was happy, that the views expressed by me in the very first article, attracted the attention of some thinking people, and with that I became even from those days a kind of controversial figure with rejoinders of that type in the press though not rebuttals.

But what I was then thinking was about the man who did that journalistic mischief of not printing the name of the writer of the article. Was his mind a diseased one? It was a crude thing that tried to suppress the name of an unknown school boy the moment one learns from others that the boy was writing and only writing. Such fellows in the Press filled with dirt and filth in mind are just the snakes and their mischief is equal to snake-bites. For the present, I may call one such as 'G' (I mean, Gupta), and tolerating such a filth and fraud for too long would be too much. Oh, blast it out-right.

46. 'KODAVA SAMSKRITI'—WHAT'S THIS?

I passed out of the school, and I was the only secretary of the school Union to successfully complete my schooling

in the very first year of my stay in the top class when all the half-a-dozen predecessors of mine who had worked in that capacity year after year had to stay in the same class for two years and in some cases for three years. I stood first in two of my pet subjects, *Kannada and History*, successively for three years and in all the examinations. This interest in Kannada was some what surprising to myself, especially because there was no traditional reason for me to be so, and as to History, most of the dull details of historic events together with dates, used to be in my finger tips even from those days. Anyway, I took the school leaving certificate as I left the school, and in that I found that the same man who had written that my "behavior not satisfactory" had now written that my behaviour was good, and as secretary of the school union, I had done good work. Then what?

I had just then sent another article to *The Kodagu*, and that was published, and it was in the year 1938. Then again I found my name missing and the article appeared under some pseudonym. How come? Well, I stopped thinking about that.

After leaving the school, I took to teaching for some time. I began sending articles to the papers in Mangalore and there I saw all of them printed, and they carried my name too. Most of those writings were on the Kodava culture, and one of the articles caught the eyes of Biddanda Kushalappa who was then the Deputy Inspector of Schools, and he, at a meeting, spotted me out and told me that he had read it. I was happy.

In 1939 I went to the Mahajana Sanskrit College to prosecute my studies in Kannada and Sanskrit. On my way

I took a testimonial from Pattada Uthayya who was then the headmaster of Mercara High School. He would afford life even to a log of wood by his art of writing testimonials to his students. He wrote on the 6th June 1939, as below:—

".. At school, Muthanna was an example to other students; well-behaved, diligent, and always useful to others; he won the love of all the teachers. Apart from being good in his studies, he had a special aptitude for writing Kannada poems and both students and teachers used to enjoy his compositions .".

During my stay at the Sanskrit College, I started a literary society, and conducted a weekly literary discourses. The proceedings of all those as well as my articles, were published in the Mangalore papers many a time. After a busy schedule of two years with various activities together with the teaching work, I passed out of my course successfully. The college authorities themselves paid my examination fees etc in appreciation of my services. The Principal's letter of the 23rd May 1941, said that, "Muthanna was a teacher in this institution I have always found him regular, dutiful and well-behaved "

Thus I did the learning and earning together, and finished the five-year course of study in Kannada and Sanskrit of Madras University in two years. I was the first in Coorg to obtain an University diploma in two languages although there were in Coorg one or two brahmin teachers who had diplomas in Sanskrit only, and from some private institutions.

Once in 1940, I sent an article to the Kodagu Weekly after about half-a-dozen articles on Kodava culture were

published and in my name. But this article had some significance. It was captioned as 'Kodava Samskriti', and it was the first time that phrase was used and no one had used it till then. That article came in a special issue of the Kodagu Weekly. I was then in Mangalore. Later, Pandianda Belliappa, the Editor, told me that the people appreciated the article, 'Kodava Samskriti' very much. Yes, he stressed the words, 'very much'.

In October 1942, I delivered a lecture on the same subject at the Vedanta Sangha, Mercara. I spoke to a crowded hall for more than an hour and it was a success. Among the elite of the town who had assembled to listen, Iychettira Subbayya was one who was then a Munsiff Magistrate. He congratulated me on my performance and wished me well.

For about four months I was in the National War Front office, and it was at that time in 1943, I happened to know Dewan Bahadur Ketolira Chengappa who was then working as its chief during the war time. It was then I found time to write my small book 'Kodava Samskriti.' I got the book printed at the Kodagu Press, and it was there for the first time I saw some workers who were meddling or tampering with my articles. A criminal practice indeed. How many articles of how many contributors were tampered like that with an evil and vicious design by the fellow there,—those poor writers of the articles alone can say. But how can they say, and how to ask them? But I know that someone there has been on such mischief from the very beginning, at least from 1937, when I first sent the article. Of course, I repeat that I didn't know any of those fellows at that time and for many years, viz. at least till 1943.

Anyway, when my book was in that Press, in 1943, I could see people "with no academic qualifications as such" with young school girls and sometimes with young boys, perhaps, politicking with them, or might have been spoiling the minds of the young boys and girls. Well, some boys were telling he was doing the latter.

When my book came out, Dewan Bahadur Chengappa took interest to glance through the book, and later congratulated me. I never knew that a man of that stature would take all the trouble to appreciate the writings of a youngster like me !

Rao Bahadur Kodira Uthappa, then Assistant Commissioner, happened to see me somewhere on the road and alled me as he was still inside his car. He profusely congratulated me on the book and wished me well. In fact, it was with the publication of that book, people'knew that customs and manners of the Kodavas had some scientific and ethical background. No doubt, the earlier writers on Coorg had done a good groundwork on the subject, but their approach was quite different. They did not at all stress on "Sanskriti" or the cultural aspect of the subject. I told about that to some extent in my article of 1940, and later in the booklet that was published in 1943. It was then many of the readers were making some cynical comments, "Kodava Sanskriti-What's this"? Yes, they were right, because there was a need for such folks to know more about the significance of the Kodava customs and manners. Among the many letters of appreciation that I got in that connection, I would like to quote the one written by Swami Deshikananda who was then at the Salem Ramakrishna Mutt. He wrote that :

"Let me at the very outset congratulate you for the amount of success you have achieved for your maiden attempt at writing both prose and poetry. You have better prospects in store... I went through your 'Kodava Samskriti' from cover to cover with interest and profit. It is on the whole a nice reading.

"I am glad to note that you have pressed into your service well and also made use of the folk-lore and folk-songs of the Kodavas of yore including their usages and customs for your theme and essay. And, in fact, these are the basis and source of culture of a people. Admiration of the past should not amount to adoration of everything old and past. Far from it, culture or civilization, broadly speaking, is built on a harmonious blend of both the past and present.....

"In one word, culture is that which leads one to his goal of life Anything that enables one to attain good, SHREYAS, is culture. Collectively it is called the culture of the people as individual is the organism of society . .

This was a long letter. The learned Swamiji had picked up points from my work and then explained at length his views on culture and about the Kodava Samskriti. He also made a reference to my wishes that I had expressed in the book stating that I would be continuing the same work to bring it to a thorough and substantial end. Proceeding, therefore, he wrote that :-

"I am glad to note on page on 35 of your book, your assurance to the readers that you would place before the reading public, the greatness of the Kodava culture. While translating it into action, I do hope,

you will give a reliable and true history of the Kodavas which would emerge and come into being from your labour in that connection... I believe you will not only set your shoulders to the wheel to bring out as contemplated, a treatise in the immediate future and thus fulfil a long felt want by the Kodavas in that. Thus you will render a noble and lasting service to your community and the literary world as well."

47. 'A MAD FELLOW'-GOING ABOUT CRAZY.

As I began working as a teacher, my difficulty was that people in Coorg including those officials of the Education department, who were just the ordinary graduates, would not understand what it was all that I had studied. When everyone used to do their usual collegiate studies, a mad fellow like me indulged in a sort of study which was not heard of at all at that time. None of them knew what it was and they considered that it was audacious on my part to be called a 'Vidwan' when not even a brahmin was ~~not~~ known as such in those days. Moreover, as Hilton Brown said (quoted already), the Kodavas have had a bad habit, or "a ready willingness to be dominated by the outsider". They would think that any third-rate outsider or a fourth-rate brahmin available locally are all something wonderful. That was the position then, and, now of course, they have no power to even think, and the conditions have changed, and they say that the world is "running".

For some months I worked in what was then known as District Board Schools, but soon I got an acting teacher's post at the Virarajpet High School, and surpris-

ingly enough I was in the class to teach where three or four of my classmates were still there. Nevertheless, they were not disheartened to see me going to their class, and, on the other hand, they congratulated me and escorted me to their classroom and then sat at the back row to observe how I would perform.

When my friends took that in such a spirit, it was distressing to find some of my teachers behaving differently. They thought that my going there as a teacher had aggravated their problem, and, therefore, they acted in a different way, and that was disgusting. My term over and then in the end of the year 1942, I was appointed for a short period as a Warden of the Students' hostel at Mercara. Those were the worst times of the century, especially for the agriculturists and the job-seekers, and all that was due to the economic crisis of the decade that preceded and the impacts of the ravaging world war that followed. Any way that was the time when I, as so many others, had frequent changes before getting settled at one place and that was an exhilarating experience.

It was in April 1943. Truly it was a "massive structure" for a Iyn House, and comparatively an impressive structure of those times. Once a year people gather there to celebrate a family festival, and the deities worshipped on the occasion are all of Malayalee origin, and it is so in most of the temple festivals of the Kodavas, and, an explanation to this effect is elaborately given in the brochure 'Kodava Samskriti', at pages 36 to 40.

On the occasion of this festival every year the family people, some of their relatives and some neighbours gather. The rituals are conducted throughout the night, but the

deities show themselves long after midnight, and at dawn the ceremony reaches its climax and a truly divine feeling or godly presence pervade the scene and everyone would be alert with a deep feeling of devotion and prostration.

I hit upon a novel idea that year to spend some hours before midnight usefully and profitably. I took Haridas B. Gopaladas with me to the festival arranging with him to perform Harikatha after the family supper was over instead of the people whiling away the time with no other interesting activity. Therefore, arrangements were made to have the religious discourse at the main hall, and after supper, the assembled guests and the members of the family, both ladies and men, gathered and sat at the either wing of the hall. Gopaladas started his discourse, and the people sat listening to him with great interest. It was then about 10 p.m. He carried on for about 20 minutes and drew the attention of his listeners with a couple of fine songs. Then began the introductory part of the story when all of a sudden there was an uproarious scene in protest of Harikatha. According to them, everyone was expected to concentrate on the preparations for the eventual festivity, but as one could see, that was just an excuse for their vicious plan of sabotaging the Harikatha programme.

Three or four men with their sleeves raised up to their shoulders dashed in through the front door of the house and towards poor Gopaladas who stood befuddled and then kept staring at me in dismay. The men were shouting and they considered it as a disgrace to have Harikatha during the time when people would otherwise go to sleep and a few might attend to the preliminary preparations. Anyway, having had known the game as to what they

were up to, I calmly told the Harikatha man to put a stop to his discourse and let the rowdies have their time. They, however, had their time and the assembled people were terribly disappointed and then dispersed to hang on in and around the house and kill time. I too disappeared into a room and went to sleep. Thus a nice programme was neatly wrecked and things calmed down to a disgraceful silence and sleep, after some time.

However, what happened after that was interesting. When I was not seen anywhere there for sometime after that, people began to search for me. They thought that in the confusion that ensued, I was greatly perturbed and even disgusted with life, and, perhaps, as a result, I must have jumped into a well in that dead of night or plunged into the tank that is in front of the house. People thought that a great tragedy had happened, and some of them took their flash-light as well as firewood torches and went about searching for me or possibly for my dead body in the tank, and a few looked into a couple of wells. They thought that I was in there, and then wanted to see if I was fully dead or left half dead. An hour or two passed, and no one could trace my whereabouts and they thought that a great tragedy had happened and it was only a question of time to know about that. The search for me continued by a few, and finally an old man during his search in all the bedrooms of all the houses around, was surprised to see me sleeping and even snoring in the room of that same leading rowdy who caused the disturbance.

Well, the man went back and informed people that I was alive in flesh and blood and that there was no cause to worry. He also brought some rowdies and showed the place

where I was sleeping when I pretended as though I was in deep sleep. What they said was that only a mad man would get one to perform Harikatha during such a solemn occasion. That was right, only a mad man would do that. On the other hand, what was seen to make the festival colourful was much more wonderful. I could see no godly atmosphere anywhere there. The whole courtyard was crowded, and people in groups were reaching nearer God in ecstasy by gambling in games of dice, cards, chequers etc. The rows of bangle sellers, pea-nut grocers, tea-shop owners, fortune tellers and others were all busy trading, and they made festival lively and that's indeed the India of the Hindus, that ancient race that is fallen into disgrace and degradation on account of the people who trade on God and with God as their trademark. Therefore, anyone thinking of God to remain in such a place ought to be mad. Yes, the people who said so are right. I too was mad, and it was their bad luck that in spite of many torches flashing around they could not see the mad man either in the tank or in the well where they expected him to be. It is indeed wonderful to see all these sane and insane people living together in the same world which prides of its being in an age known as 'Sputnick Age'. Hell be to that 'Age' and to the 'sage' who knows not what he says or does !

48. TOO MANY THINGS BUT TOO LITTLE

Dewan Bahadur Chengappa who was the chief of the National War Front in Coorg, was appointed as the Chief Commissioner, and he took charge of the post on the 26th

April 1943. The first appointment he made as Chief Commissioner was that of mine as a teacher at the Central High School. He took the decision all by himself and he did not even formally consult the Education Officer who was a muddle-headed type and who was just serving his superannuation period. My appointment as a teacher from the 1st June 1943, carried with it an advanced increment and that was an additional gesture of kindness on his part where such a thing was not at all done at that time and it left the people to look at things about me with some justified surprise.

Once I got the job that I wanted, I was up on my 'business'. That same year in 1943, I delivered about twelve public lectures in Coorg and at various places and that included one at the Coorg Educational Conference, on 'Kavi Shishya' whom I had only seen for a few minutes exactly fifteen years prior to that, and about which I have already stated behind. That conference was well attended and those dignitaries included the Chief Commissioner also. On a couple of Government functions like the Tunisia Day in 1943 and the Victory Day in 1945, I recited my own poems and those were, no doubt, well-received.

In the school, along with my legitimate duties, I used to take interest in various extra-curricular activities, and, as the Vice-President of the Co-operative Book Stores, I turned out a record business for the year but refused to accept renomination for another year. The headmaster Biddanda Kushalappa praised my services on the occasion of the annual school day celebrations in the presence of the Chief Commissioner who had presided over the function.

With all this, I was also mad as some people said. Within that short time, I was also a recipient of some Government letters asking me to explain about some incidents. One of them was about a complaint against me by a police head-constable stating that I had pushed him out of the school hall due to the reason that he had no business to be sneaking around while school functions were on. The Chief Commissioner in response to that complaint that he received through the Superintendent of Police, warned me not to do so in future. Yes, I did not do so thereafter, but what was more interesting was that no policeman was seen in the school compound during such functions and no one was seen policing around there after the incident.

From 1944 to 1949, I have been in the committee of the Karnataka Sangha and in the local committee of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat, and also in the Vedanta Sangha where I delivered too many lectures on different subjects. The annual session of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat was held at Madras in 1945, and I represented the Coorg Karnataka Sangha and attended that. I addressed the gathering for a short time on Coorg folklores.

I used to join the rest of the members to collect money for public funds including the Coorg Education Fund. By the year 1945, I had already cleared the loan that I had taken from that fund as well as from private sources.

In the year 1946, I was also the Warden of the students' hostel, a type of 'baby-sitting' job in charge of a large number of young men. One day an old man Apadanda Ganapathy came to me with a manuscript of his on Kodava culture. He said that he was going to print it in a book form, and, therefore, he wanted a 'foreword'

from me. I expressed my surprise that an elderly person like him should call on me for the purpose. I suggested to him to go to the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa stating that he would be a proper person to do that.

But Apadanda Ganapathy said that he found me proper to write a 'foreword' to his book for two reasons. Firstly, he said that that he had read my 'Kodava Samskriti' as well as other articles on the subject, and that he had found me well-informed on that. Secondly, he said that the Assistant Commissioner Kodira Uthappa himself had directed him to go to me saying that I was the suitable person to do that.

These things in a way horrified me in addition to my being overjoyed by the sentiments expressed by those two gentlemen. However, I told him to leave his manuscript with me for a day and he would have the 'foreword' the next day.

I went through his book and found the matter that he mentioned as jumbled. Nevertheless, I ventured to write a foreword with some comments. When he came on the next day morning I told him that I had to be true to my conscience while writing my views. I would not call everyone as 'God-Send' or as one taking 'infinite pains'. I call a spade a spade, and I told him that that was all what I could do. That gentleman was disappointed, but I could not help anyway.

I remember a couple of other incidents also. Pandianda Belliappa had asked me to go to him once. As we were talking and then discussing on something, inside his house and in the inner apartments, I could hear the voice of a man, probably an intruder, talking while the others giggled.

I was later told that that man used to be there every day, and that might have been 'Gupta' who had found Coorg being in the 'Sputnick Age' already and even from that time. - Well, what was he doing there?

In the school I had my own way of working. The Inspectors and others did not bother me and in a way I used to ignore their presence during the annual inspections taking the risk of my being misunderstood by them. They did misunderstand me but soon realised that they had evaluated me wrongly. I would never display any formality or artificiality. Once an officer himself had to tell me, "At least on the inspection day should you not bring the pictures for demonstration?" Yes, he wanted the charts and pictures just "at least for the inspection day", but my difficulty was that I found no use of those on that day although I made use of those on other days though they were not inspection days. In that way my popularity was always rising and falling once in fifteen days.

I had just then got printed my poems in Kodava language and that was my maiden attempt at that. I went about reciting those poems at many schools and public gatherings all over Coorg. Those recitals gave me immense satisfaction although I didn't care for what others said. Even then there were some constant admirers and among them, the then Superintendent of Police, Nellamakala Subbayya was one and he was so till the very end. He passed away in 1957 only ten days after he talked in kindly as well as glowing terms about me.

From 1942 to 1949, I went about to various examination centres of Madras University to appear for examina-

tions in full or in parts, and I kept up the tempo. Twice a year, both for the March and September examinations, I would pay fees but would not appear every time because of my diffidence to do so. I could find very little time to concentrate on my studies, and yet I used to appear for the examinations just for the fun of it. During this period I went to Mangalore, Tellicherry, and Calicut on different occasions. Twice I went to Trichinopoly taking a couple of months, leave and to Madras as well.

The Karnataka Sangha of which I used to be a member of the Committee every year, failed to impress me. Those members of the Committee consisted of active politicians who were the staunch advocates of merger of Coorg to Karnataka, and, therefore, there was only politics in that and no literary activity at all. Once in 1945, they proposed me to be a Secretary or assistant secretary of the Sangha, and I had to reluctantly refuse because I thought that I would not be able to fit in there as none of the members were interested in what I was interested. They thought, therefore, that I was an inconvenient companion to them. They were right.

When some of the Karnataka leaders and literates used to come to Coorg, their main theme of speeches would always be about the benefits that Coorg would derive if it merged into Karnataka. Once it so happened that in 1946 that some of the local members of the Karnataka Sangha gave some prejudicial reports about me to Masti Venkatesha Iyengar who talked to me about the Karnataka politics of the day. I had to tell him rather bluntly that I had expected to know from them things about literature and not about politics. Though it caused them some surprise,

I held to what I said. After this incident, I saw Dr. Masti after five years at the Belur Sahitya Parishat, where he talked to me kindly and since then he was one of my well-wishers outside Coorg.

How I fared in the school, and as a teacher, I can't say. There are hundreds and thousands of my students all over, and I should boast, in all the continents, who might say as to what I was. Some might say that I was quite rude, some might say that I was very simple, some as strict and yet a good number of them might say that I was good. But I would only say that I was too busy dabbling in many things and now I don't remember as to what exactly I did. There were too many things on hand but all that seemed to have been at the same time too little for me and consequently I was thoroughly dissatisfied with the conditions that existed in those days.

49. HARADAS APPACHA KAVI - DISCOVERED

Long back in the year 1919 or 1920, a small gathering of the leading citizens of Mercara including some Europeans, were witnessing a drama enacted by Appanera-vanda Appacha Kavi. The drama over, one or two in the assembly rose up to speak in appreciation of the talents of the Kavi.

The Kavi himself wrote about that saying that those gentlemen said that if not then, about twenty years hence, he would be known as a great poet and his name would resound all over as a famous play-wright, actor and scholar.

That was all, and after that everything was forgotten. Those men who spoke high of the poet themselves forgot him, and years rolled on with nothing spectacular happening in Coorg in that direction of dramatic art and literature.

I was born somewhat at that time, may be a few months that side or this side, when those men were admiring the talents of Appacha Kavi telling that after about twenty years he would be considered as one of the greatest literary men of our times.

My mother named her puny new - born lad as Appacha though I don't attribute any coincidence here. But this name Appacha to the child did not stand long as it was very sickly. Therefore, with new offerings and prayers to a deity, the sickly child's name was changed from Appacha to Muthanna, and that Muthanna happened to be myself who in turn happened to rediscover Appacha Kavi almost after twenty years.

Yes, it was almost after twenty years in January 1942, I spoke for the first time about Appacha Kavi for over an hour and a half at the Virarajpet High School. When the programme was scheduled, the headmaster himself told me that he was interested to listen to me, and consequently he presided over the meeting. All the teachers and students heard me with rapt attention and it was indeed an encouraging prospect for me. I had then read only two of the Kavi's plays, and with that I made myself sure and certain that here was a gem that was not noticed with sympathy by the arrogant and cynical folk that was around him. Immediately after my Virarajpet speech, I spoke at Ponnampet and then the rest of the speeches followed.

That was in fact an innovation of a movement.

Another interesting thing happened, and that was in August 1942. I was in Mangalore in connection with some examination. Accidentally it so happened that one evening at about five o'clock when I was strolling along the Car Street, I walked into the Sharada Press, rather absent-mindedly. That is what is called "There is a tide in the affairs of men". I went in and took interest in watching the printing machines in action while the workers were all busy. As I was going round, I saw in a corner a heap of printed paper, and those were the old sheets of paper almost getting rot. I took a few of them to see what it was, and to my surprise I found that it was Appacha Kavi's 'Subramanya Nataka'. The whole thing was printed but the work on it was suspended because the Kavi could not pay the printing charges. I told the workers to carefully collect all the printed sheets and then spoke to the manager of the press to start binding of the copies, and that I would pay the entire cost of the work. The man agreed to do the work and deliver the copies to me within a fortnight or so.

That same evening I wrote a letter to the Kavi although I had not known him personally till then, stating that I would be taking the copies of "Subramanya Nataka" out of the Press. The Kavi replied to me immediately and blessed me profusely "for the trouble I was taking" in regard to his work. A few days later, I returned to Coorg, arranged for the money, and took the bundle of copies of the book from the press, and sold them myself, though I could not sell very many copies.

Among the many lectures that I delivered during the

Kavi's life-time, one was at Napoklu on the 13th April 1943, when C. M. Rama Rao, then Education Officer, had presided over the function. The local people were surprised to learn that the Kavi who lived amongst them was so great and that they had not known of the fact till then. That was not funny after all, and that was just their lack of knowledge and a pathetic lack of spirit of appreciation and accommodation of others.

In Mercara school, the first thing that I did was to get the Yayati Raja Nataka enacted by the hostel students, and it was a tremendous success. The headmaster Pattada Uthayya congratulated me openly before the audience and so did later on Iychettira Subbayya who had presided over the function.

Here I may state that I feel guilty to express a certain incident. Once in about the month of October 1944, the Kavi had come to the school where I was working. I didn't know as to why he was there, and I was reluctantly shy to talk to him, and loudly too as he was deaf. He too did not feel like expressing himself openly in the presence of many others. Anyway the two intimate souls which might have been talking to each other in their hearts, met but still they lost the opportunity of talking to each other face to face about their problem. In fact, I was thinking that I could meet him leisurely in solitude and take possession of all his manuscripts including that of his Kannada songs about which he had written to me two years prior to that stating that he had them ready.

But the ways of God are certainly inscrutable. The tragic thing was that the Kavi passed away within only a month after our meeting. That was certainly an unkind

sequence of unexpected events. What to say after that. If I had had the good fortune of getting all his songs, especially the Kannada songs, I would have certainly ranked him along with the great Dasas like Purandara Dasa, and this is certainly not an exaggeration. But destiny somehow worked against him as well as me, and, of course against the lovers of art and culture. However, gone are those days, but those days are not gone from my mind, although I am now in an entirely different corner of the world.

Well, the Kavi passed away on the 21st November 1944, and soon after that on the 18th December, a public meeting was arranged in Mercara with an idea of starting a memorial fund in his honour. Leaflets about the meeting were printed and widely distributed, and, on those given to the officials, it was written by me that, "your presence is earnestly required." The Assistant Commissioner Kodira Uthappa presided over the meeting. Niddemane Muddappa the District Judge, who spoke first, said that he had seen all the books written by the Kavi and had enjoyed reading them. Pandianda Belliappa speaking next said that there would have been much larger number of people at a meeting of that kind if the Kavi had died when he was at the peak of his glory and activity. The retired Education Officer Rama Rao said that he had seen the Kavi in action twice or thrice, and that he was certainly a talented actor and writer. Pandikuthira Ghengappa, the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, spoke last. To some of the speakers including the President, I had to give some details about the Kavi's life and activities in writing and in advance, since they did not know what exactly they could

say about him. After the speeches were over, the names of the officials who were present, were proposed for the Memorial Fund Committee.

Proposing a vote of thanks, I spoke for about twenty minutes and my speech was cheered and applauded twice when I referred to some aspects of the Kavi's literary career. I also stressed on the need of a memorial fund. Niddemane Muddappa congratulated me after the meeting, and Iychettira Subbayya who was also present, told me that every word of what I said should be published. But the editors of the papers were already there and they didn't care a hoot to do anything of the sort and they even failed to publish the proceedings of the meeting till I requested them to do so.

Among the members of the Committee, Rao Bahadur Kodira Uthappa and Pandikuthira Chengappa took some interest to collect funds and their official influence did help in many ways. Uthappa used to take me with him during his official tours, and at many places both of us spoke, and thus an awareness was created in the minds of the people about the Kavi. Nothing about those several meetings were published or mentioned in the Kodagu Weekly, and then I knew, and even from that time, that it was a green-eyed journal which was not serving the cause of the people properly.

In 1945, the Mercara Karnataka Sangha undertook to celebrate the "Smaraka Utsava" of Appacha Kavi when some of the leading literary men of Karnataka also attended and took part in the function. I was one of the main speakers, and, anyway, all this was deliberately left out without being published in the Kodagu Weekly when we



wanted a good publicity to make our effort a success.

In the month of December 1946, I got a group of students trained to enact Subramanya Nataka and took them round to Murnad, Ponnampet, Ammathi, Virarajpet and Napoklu. There was plenty of co-operation and good-will of the public and even of the officials including the chief commissioner, over this programme. The amount collected from out of this venture came up to about Rs. 850 and, out of which Rs. 650 was distributed to various funds like Appacha Kavi Memorial Fund, the then Bengal-Bihar Relief Fund, the (Students') Congress Fund, the Devayya (Codanda) Memorial fund and the Kodava Education Fund, and the first letters of the names of each of these five 'funds' were put as A,B,C,D,E. and for which the benefit shows were performed. These kinds of activities also benefited to popularise the name of the Kavi and his works.

Who says now that I should not call the Kodagu Weekly a vicious yellow journal. When the students sacrificed their holiday, went round with their drama troupe to many places and collected a good sum which were distributed for the public funds, the damn Kodagu Weekly was simply silent about all those things, and even refused to publish some bulletins which were taken to them by the boys. Later they were got printed in the Janma Bhoomi Weekly.

With these sorts of people in the Press with malice and hatred brimming in them, what could a community or country expect? Such fellows would at best fit into the tribe of lorry loaders and trolley pullers with their old names like 'G.' (I mean, Gupta.) Anyway, I was a silent

observer of the disgraceful performance of that so called oldest Weekly which was a bad loser from end to end due to its own villainy. I did not bother to remind that of its duty because I was happily patronised by all the top officers of those days in all my activities. But the students were disappointed when I had to tell them not to worry about things told or not told in such trash. They agreed, but laughed when I said that in Coorg-, news reach everyone long before the so called newspapers would carry them to the people.

I had to once ask in 1948 for a loan from the said memorial fund to pay the printing charges of the magazine which I was editing. But the members of the committee regretted, and rightly too, that it would be unsafe to give the collection out like that. I appreciated their idea and the proceedings of that meeting which included the turning down of my request, was published by myself in my magazine as well as in the other two weeklies. That was the way how I wanted to show about myself.

It was decided to install the Kavi's portraits in the halls of five Government High Schools, and twice I went to Bangalore at my own cost to get the paintings done. Later I arranged for the unveiling function at five different centres. The officers who had agreed to unveil the photograph at some places disappointed at the last moment just for the reason that they had no official tour programme. But the leaflets had already been printed and distributed at those places, and therefore, I got it done with the help of the local headmasters and the public. Of course the President himself unveiled the photograph of the Kavi at three centres and all this was in 1948 and

1949. Anyway those were the hectic days for me when I did not spare time, money or anything of the sort.

What was generally asked by the people in this connection was why the poet was left unnoticed during his lifetime. The only answer to this is that as long as the people remain uneducated in spite of their modern superfluous education, such things go on occurring everywhere and at all times. Moreover, to know and appreciate artistic talents, at least one among the one thousand should be well-versed in fine arts. In Coorg as in many other places, there were none to recognise or appreciate the artistic talents of anyone, and in fact, it was only the European writers who guided the Indians in that line in the last century by themselves learning and publishing the Indian folklores and other literary pieces.

These days I could see the joke very clearly when the man who out of some prejudice or jealousy was talking ill of the Kavi, himself becoming an admirer of the Kavi all of a sudden, and the one like 'G.' (I mean, Gupta) who did'nt know anything nor did he care to appreciate with others anything of the Kavi's works, suddenly showing himself as very much interested in him now. These are the ways of crooks. These kinds of *Thamaasha* is after all not new in the world, and if we see such a thing in Coorg also one need not take a serious note of it. Appacha Kavi would have created nice comic characters out of such pitiable folks.

49. GANDHI JAYANTI CELEBRATIONS

Politicians in India were getting ready to play an

effective role after visualising long before the country became free that their days of destiny were approaching. Therefore, very many strange people began to call themselves as Congressmen or in other words, as fighters for freedom. Where they fought, what they fought for and with whom they fought and all that was a different matter. Anyway there were strange combinations and comradeship of people on the eve of the country becoming free. In Coorg too people saw such comradeship among the politicians.

The Gandhi Jayanti was celebrated by such people who took interest in poor Gandhi all of a sudden, and as usual on the 2nd October 1946, with a large number of people attending. The Central High School hall was crowded. All the teachers and students were also present on the occasion. I too was there although I was about a quarter of an hour late.

As soon as I reached the school building, a colleague of mine took me aside and told me what had happened within that short quarter of an hour. He told me that the gentleman who had presided over the meeting, Iychettira Subbayya, a government servant, but also an active party-politician, criticised the whole lot of teachers in such a way that those teachers had felt like staging a walk out from the hall. According to that teacher, the President was reported to have said as follows :

" This being a Gandhi Jayanti day, we must know what we should do and how we should behave. As we were coming, we had to stop the car on the other side of the school gate and kept on waiting for the gate to be opened. What were the teachers doing ? Arc

there no one to look after these things? What kind of teachers are these? Are they fit to hold on to their profession?.

This speech was in Kannada and only the summary of that was passed on to me. Somehow I felt that those remarks were serious and I was thinking in terms of asking the man to withdraw what he said, and, therefore, talked about that to one or two senior colleagues of mine who were there outside the hall. Of all the persons and teachers, why I should have been infuriated by those remarks is a thing that I myself can't say. Anyway one thing was sure, and, that is, I would have raised objection in the way I did even if those remarks were made by someone else. However, as I was just talking to others, the Education Officer Pattada Uthayya came, and I took him aside and told him the whole thing. He too agreed with us and then walked in and sat somewhere on the dais and observed the entire fun that happened after that.

I stood at the door-way of the hall and near the platform and waited for the gentleman who was speaking to finish his speech. Later, soon after he finished his, the next speaker, Cheppudira Poonacha, was called and he was on his legs. But then I intruded and asked the Chairman to allow me to speak a few words, when he thought that I could be just brushed aside or ignored, and said, rather rudely, that he would not allow me to speak.

From that point, it set up a thrilling prelude to a chain of eventful happenings. When the Chairman turned down my request, the students in the hall who had applauded his speech earlier when he criticised the teachers, now turned against him and raised an uproar. He realised

that the tide had now turned, and therefore, announced that after Poonacha had finished his, he would allow me to speak.

Yes, after that he allowed me. I did not go up the dais but stood in front at the second step of the platform, and then with great diffidence, and quite calmly as well as logically, cut down the Chairman's insinuating remarks into pieces. The hesitation on my part to express in a strong language was due to the reason that I was conscious of the fact that I was attacking a senior member of my own family. Anyway I did it and ran out. There was a great applause when I finally asked him, rather coolly, to withdraw his remarks.

The Chairman later tried to be evasive, but then the teachers and students in the hall created an uproar and for sometime there was a great confusion. The teachers stood up shouting that they would walk out of the hall if the remarks were not withdrawn, and when they, irrespective of any caste or communal considerations were raising their voice against the Chair, the others in the dais like Niddemane Muddappa, his brother Somanna, Kittur Mallappa and others were murmuring abuses towards them. All this was heard by their friends who were sitting with them and who were also teachers. Thus the whole hall was filled with a kind of pandemonium, and the Chairman had no other way but to withdraw what he said. Then again there was applause accompanied by uncontrollable noise, and then things returned to normal.

After that Shivamurthy Sastry, now Padma Sri of Bangalore, and lately a friend of mine, started his religious discourse. But I was not in a mood to stay on there, and

hence, I soon disappeared from the scene and started taking my grub in my room in the hostel.

Later, after the meeting was over, reports came to me through the boys, stating that Muddappa's car was hit by stones and brickbats. It was about 9 p.m. by that time. Some miscreants must have done that from somewhere in the dark and that incident added some 'fuel' to that unhappy scene of an hour before.

My colleagues and students knew that my intrusion there, was without any ulterior motive or rancour in me. But those politicians, especially those involved few, would not take it that way. They said that I took a leading part in asking the Chairman to withdraw his remarks just out of spite because we were of the same family. Some of the people characterised the incident as though it was a family quarrel brought to the open that way, and Poonacha was one who thought like that. This man with all his success in politics and political manouvring and everything connected to that, I should say, that he is not as intelligent as some of his associates, and that was how he showed himself throughout !

However, the incident over, and the next day morning the news reached the Chief Commissioner Chengappa, and he was obviously not happy when he heard from the District Judge Muddappa about the things that took place. The latter gave him a distorted as well as an exaggerated version of the whole thing.

But he was soon followed by the Education Officer Uthayya who was an eye-witness for the whole drama that was enacted on the previous day, and he gave the other side of the whole thing that happened, and

that made my position secure. Another gentleman who gave a very correct picture of the incident to the Chief Commissioner, was the then Superintendent of Police Nella-makala Subbayya who had gathered all about the episode from A to Z. He even carried the news to my father talking about me in an appreciative manner and all that made my position safe.

After that Muddappa stopped recognising me for a period of a year or two. The Karnataka Sangha of which he was the President also stopped functioning from that time for about three years. The rest of his friends who were the victims of the above incident, were also the same but their behaviour differed from man to man and according to the circumstances and situations of the seasons that naturally followed one after the other.

I have already mentioned about my taking a group of boys for the purpose of staging the drama written by Appacha Kavi. That was three months after the above incident and in December 1946. That drama trip, however, left some scars here and there. At Ammathi the boys hit a conductor of the bus due to the insolence of the latter. At Virajpet I shouted from the platform at a crying baby in its mother's arms which left the audience befuddled for a moment. But the significant thing that happened was at Ponnampet when I was rude in my speech towards a parent who did not allow his son to take part in the drama and for thus causing some setback in the programme. Some of the district officials including the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa, were also there at that time.

Then what? The offended parent promptly lodged a complaint against me to the Education Officer saying that

I had insulted him openly. This matter was under correspondence for about two months, and the Education Officer told me to express regret over that and put an end to that affair. The headmaster Biddanda Kushalappa, on the other hand, did not want me to express regret, as he, like many others, found that I was not at fault. He even wrote very strongly to that effect, but then things should end somewhere and it did end thus:-

But the things would not end there, and sometimes incidents would occur as though they were linked together as such. Surprisingly on a day in February 1947, and after midnight at about 2.30 a.m. my room in the students' hostel where I was sleeping, was hit by stones and brickbats and smashed the glasspanes of the windows and the door. I could not think of any devil that could do so for me at that dead of night. Soon I got up and took my torch and walked along the dormitory and woke up three or four boys and told them, what had happened. As it was dark I could not observe their reaction to an incident like that but orally they were full of sympathy for me. They suggested after some time that we go along the streets and see if any miscreants could be found, and they even suggested that we go to the quarters where a man reputed for "high thinking" and as "taking interest in matters political" and who wrote books on culture and vultures, was sleeping. In fact, I could'n't understand their idea or motives for throwing a suggestion like that, but anyway we thought it better to go round along such lanes, of course, without any purpose whatsoever, but just to kill some time in that dead of night.

It took about twelve days for me to get the culprits,

and it is interesting to note that those boys whom I had taken as confidants on that midnight hours, were themselves the fellows who indulged in that cowardly act of hitting stones while one was fast asleep. All that looked like another drama for me. One of the boys happened to be the son of that man who had complained against me saying that I had insulted him.

Well, after that, things took its own course. The headmaster, in consultation with the staff, took a drastic action of dismissing those half-a-dozen boys from the school, and the reports to that effect were sent to the higher quarters. The Kodagu, the oldest Weekly and the Janma Bhoomi, the not-so-old Weekly, published all this as a news. But then the parents of those victims revolted, first against me and later at the school authorities. Finally the whole thing ended in cancelling the dismissal orders in preference to some alternative disciplinary action.

It is futile to state at length all about the hands that played behind the scenes, and about those who took interest in many a vicious game of the sort. But then it is Nature's gift that such elements are there and always and everywhere. I have prayed for them but God did'nt hear my prayers, and the fellows for whom I pray for might turn round and ask me, "I say, who are you after all?" That's right; who am I after all?

50. THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

The Legislative Council for Goorg from the year 1924 was certainly an envious and useful institution that trained the people in the democratic form of life and activities.

The British Government of the time really deserved immense gratitude of the people of that small tract of land for affording manifold opportunities to the people to come up in public life, and, in fact, from 1924 to 1952, for 28 years, that Council was a focussing point of everyone's attention, and of course, of those who had eyes to see and energy to work in the interest of the public.

It was true that it was only a recommendatory body with limited powers, but that did not minimise its importance. The British did give consideration for most of the reasonable demands of the people made through this Council.

This Council had twenty members in all. The Chief Commissioner of Coorg was the ex-Officio President of the Council. The Assistant Commissioner was the leader of the House, the District Judge, the Secretary of the Council and the Forest Officer and the Education Officer represented their respective departments. There were two nominated European members and one nominated Indian member who represented the backward classes. The rest were the elected members but through a restricted franchise which was then and even now a more sensible thing than the modern adult franchise.

Apart from its strict business-like proceedings, the Council afforded a good deal of fun and frolic, and some times it used to take a dramatic turn when the members tried to hit one another, and some among them even taking the role of proverbial clowns. Of course, that was not an exclusive thing here as such things are common even today in all the legislative bodies everywhere.

I began to observe the proceedings of this Council of

Goorg whenever I was free, since about 1943. I may here cite an instance to show the humorous side of the proceedings of the Council. In 1944, one CB. speaking on the State budget, referred to the remarks of one NS. and said:

Mr. C.B. :—^a—his mind turned perhaps to certain things which were unfounded but all the same ...

Mr. N.S. :—^a On a point of order, Sir, may I know whether this has a place in the budget discussion, viz. what another man has spoken ?

Mr. C.B. :—^a What another spoke, not on the budget but incidentally, is relevant fact. He is going to be repentant, anyway, for certain mistakes....

Mr. N.S. :—^a My friend has to learn etiquette.

Mr. C.B. :—^a Oh yes, I have got a lot in me and can explain a lot if you want. Mere repentance or regret cannot wash away the effect of what has been spoken which will never go back

There used to be one or two members who spoke only in Kannada. One such member once spoke as though he was before a devil-dancer praying or begging for some relief from a disaster that might have taken place around him. He said (in Kannada) :—

^a Hon'ble President, Sir, I beg to statethat this year ryots suffered very much. Cattle disease is spreading and we lost many heads of cattle. What is in store for the ryots in the coming year, we can't say. We have no oxen to plough our lands. Wetlands may have to be left without cultivating the paddy crop I beg of the Government to protect us from this miserable plight.....".

Some politicians were speaking only perfect politics. Their speeches had a Nehru touch in them when that man used to tell the huge crowds that corruption was rampant in the country and all black-marketeers should be hung from every lamp post and so on. Later what he did, the whole country knew. In the same way, one local politician said in 1947 on the floor of the Coorg legislative Council that :—

“.....A reference was made to the corruption I think he was rather too mild on that pointI can give instances, why instances? It is a regular thing going on in your (Government) offices. Certain people, interested people, go to certain departments and they pass cigarette packets containing currency notes.....”.

After this what did this politician do from 1952 to 1956 to erradicate corruption in Coorg, was also known to everyone. Cheppudira Poonacha's slogan or his theme to mould his political stand was this which he had learnt from the very beginning. That theme helped him, no doubt, but one could hardly find any benefit from the alternative plans that took place after that. What he was repeatedly saying was as below :—

“ And, then Sir, I have to say that this Administration before the Government of India, is rather weak You should have insisted upon the Government of India that Coorg should be treated more liberally.....Our position as well as the position of this Administration under the context of the present day time, is a bit anamalous, because we are not a centrally administered area. At every turn they have

told us that we have a Council of our own composed of elected representatives ...Neither we are a centrally administered area; nor a provincially administered area, nor a Government governed by the Scheduled Districts ActWe are neither a regular province, we are neither a centrally administered area, but only a Chief Commissioner's Province with a Council of its own, after all doing not much.....".

His headache was that. He used so many words again and again to tell the same thing and then get into nothing. He was in that way a great constitutional expert who had this theme for his political consumption. As to his own election to the Constituent Assembly by one vote majority, he went on to say that :—

"There were references..... about the election of a member from this Council to the Constituent AssemblyHe has failed to understand the implications of the Cabinet Mission Plan.....What has happened under the Cabinet Plan, I or you cannot alter it. - We have to put up with it.... ..".

"Cannot alter it" and "have to put up with it". Yes, Goorg had to put up with it. But was he saying anything new? Everyone had already known that. Under adult franchise, Goorg had no hope of surviving as a separate unit even if they had tried it a century back. So things had to happen that way.

There was an interesting interpellation by Niddemane Somanna in the Council in March 1947 on the "Grant of vacant land near the Mercara Police Station". He asked

whether Mercara Municipality had applied for that vacant land, and why it was not granted to the Municipality and to whom it was granted and so on. The Government member answered those questions as below :—

“ The land was granted to the Mercara Coorg Association. They were the first applicants for the land, and the Association had no building of its own. Further, the Municipality has no funds needed to put up a building just now.”

Then again there was a series of questions stating why the land was not sold by auction, why it was given to a communal body and not to a public body and so on. The Government member answered these questions, and when he was asked whether the Coorg Association was a public body or a communal body, the Member-in-Charge shot back :

“ What is the definition of a public body ?” (laughter). The European Member Ivor Bull answered that question saying that, “ the Coorg community is not a public body. A body which is only a conglomeration of individuals cannot be a public body. If they join themselves together for some official purposes, then only it is a public body.”

There were many more questions on this from the non-Kodava members of the Council, and all that ended in a formal way. This legislative council also afforded many interesting anecdotes and dialogues, and observers were enjoying the deliberations to a great extent. Some times the jokes were of a high order. A member, though poor in English, used to persist speaking in English, and that was causing a good deal of amusement to the House.

Once he spoke as below :—

“ Mr. President, Sir, I beg to state, Sir, that in my opinion, Sir, this Province owes a debt of gratitude to the Chief Commissioner, Sir, and, Sir, has to congratulate him as we are free from the disturbances as in other Provinces (laughter). In my opinion, Sir, this is only a recommendatory Council, and the Members of this House are aware, Sir, that they could only suggest better things, Sir, for the better management of the administration, (laughter) ... Sir, coming to the District Board teachers’ strike, Sir, the authorities have not used any bad methods. The breaking open of the locks was nothing. (laughter)..... But, Sir, even though the schools were opened, Sir, there were no teachers there. Sir. (laughter)

These things apart, no one can minimise the high order, discipline and the business-like procedure this Council fostered for over a quarter of a century, and it was, no doubt, remarkable. This period of the existence and the deliberations of this legislative Council, was certainly a fine chapter of the history of the then small Province, Coorg.

51. ABOUT ‘ GANDHI JAYANTI ’ IN THE COUNCIL

At the legislative Council sessions of March 1947, the topic, rather a lively topic, that was talked about for quite a long time, was on the incident that occurred on the Gandhi Jayanti day six months prior to that time. The

topic gained momentum only after the students who stoned my room were caught and sternly dealt with. A section of the members of the Council were then at a loss to know how the culprits who hit the car of the District judge, were not caught. Therefore, they concluded that the whole lot of teachers were bad, and all of them should be transferred from there, if not beheaded. Another reason for their getting offended was that the headmaster and the staff of the Mercara High School had unanimously decided not to invite one or two of those officials involved, for any function in the school for some time due to the reasons they had known best. Taking these reasons as their main theme, a group of members of the Council talked about the whole thing on the floor of the House with the Chief Commissioner Chengappa, as the President of the Council, hearing all that with the attention that deserved. Although their main target of attack was myself, they also thought that the whole teaching community was bad. Here I give the rest of the facts together with the exact statements they made on the occasion.

Speaking under the head - Budget, Niddemane Somanna referred to the strike of the District Board teachers. Ivor Bull, the European member, raised a point of order, stating that the Budget discussions were supposed to be limited to those branches of revenue and expenditure and not to the District Board. Somanna continued to say :

“ My arguments are perfectly relevant. I wanted to mention two incidents which I certainly did not approve and I have taken the trouble of disapproving both of them. One was the case of the District Board

schools being entered into by breaking open the locks

The Hon'ble President :—" You need not refer to the District Board affairs."

However, Somanna said that as the Vice President of the Board, he was protesting 'seriously' on the encroachment of the Board by the education authorities." He referred to the following also as stated below :

"One other small matter which I could express in this House is that I had sent an interpellation which was answered this morning, about a certain incident that took place in the Central High School—The incident was the pelting of stones and other things at the car of the District Judge—In this affair the authorities concerned did not take sufficient trouble to find out the culprits. It was certainly not impossible for them if they had taken some pains—to find out the culprit. I hear that subsequently where the room of a teacher of the Central High School was pelted with stones by certain students, the culprits were found out and dealt with. I am surprised why the previous incident was not detected at all!"

Later while replying to the budget proposals, the Finance Member and the acting Assistant Commissioner Nellamakkala Subbayya, said, referring to the above charge as below :

".....I must take this opportunity over again to bring home to this House that the District Judge made a D.O. complaint to the Superintendent of Police,

which was enquired into very thoroughly and no evidence was forthcoming. As such, the case could not be proceeded with. The authorities have taken the greatest amount of pain in the enquiry and it was not proper for Somanna to make an aspersion that the authorities were halfhearted or never pursued the enquiry..... This administration is not swayed by personalities at all. We are guided merely by principles Here again he drew a contrast by citing another instance where the Resident Teacher's room in the hostel was pelted with stones and the culprits were found out. Well, in that case, complaint was not at all made to the Police or any authority. The matter was all in the school room, and the school authorities handled it. It never went beyond the precincts of the school ..."

The day's business over, talking about these things. On the next day, moving a resolution under the head "Motions on the Budget", Niddemane Somanna said :

"...The object of this cut motion is to recommend to the Chief Commissioner to give effect to periodical transfer of all teachers in the various Government High Schools of Coorg....."

"The immediate reasons which have prompted me to move this resolution is the fact that it has come to our knowledge that of late there has been a lot of indiscipline in the High Schools The whole blame for this cannot be thrown on the students, because it is the teachers that are primarily responsible.....It is an incident that has occurred against a responsible

officer of this Administration.....The hon'ble member in charge of Education, remembers, was himself present at the function. If he only knows the proceedings of the function, he would know that, to a large extent, the disturbance that day (Gandhi Jayanti day) was due to the misbehaviour of the teachers themselves. After the proceedings of that function, one could easily have inferred, it is the commonsense that could tell us, that the mischief was done either by the students or teachers.....*.

"It was a shock to learn that since the incident happened in the school, not only the teachers, but even the headmaster, had not even the courtesy to publicly regret for an incident which happened in the school.....The matter did not end there.....I know, as a matter of fact, that particular officer against whose car stones were thrown, was definitely left out of the invitations that were sent out for the school day celebrations. That is a position which is ridiculous and which nobody can tolerate.....

*They did not stop at that. A further development took place. Certain students did come to me... and they wanted me to give a talk in their debating society.....I had agreed, but later on, to my utter surprise, I learnt that the teachers had decided that I should not visit the school and give a lectureIt will not be wrong if I say that there is a definite clique in the Central High School, which is taking, not the teaching profession, but political matters as its avocation That is one incident.....".

N. Somanna did not end there. What he said in that connection made much more sense, according to him. He said :—

“Of course, we all know that in this world retribution often comes. One of the teachers who was mainly responsible for creating mischief on the Gandhi Jayanti Day and who did lot of trouble for the peaceful celebration of the day, was himself the victim of a stone-throwing incident by half-a-dozen students. This happened recently. I learn that the students were once dismissed and even reports were made to the S.S.L.C. Board for striking off their names from the rolls. Subsequently they have been excused and have been permitted to sit for their examination. I am only stating to what limit these things are going on in the schools. I was just thinking of my own school days when how much respect we had for our teachers.....”.

“I should think that a lot of all these things are mainly due to the fact that these teachers are allowed by the Government to remain in the same place to do as they like.....Things have now come to that stage when persons having some responsibility must take serious notice of these things. I think one method of solving these difficulties would be periodical transfers of these teachers from school to school”.

The Education Member in the Council, Pattada Uthayya, answered these charges with equal force and relevance. After meeting the arguments on the District Board Teachers' strike, speaking for more than an hour, he answered to the above remarks as below :—

" Mr. President, Sir, from what the hon. Mover has spoken on the resolution, it seems to me that the only argument for transferring teachers is that some among the public are not pleased with them. It looks almost personal, and I should like to know from the hon. members whether it is fair, because some of them are wounded, to ask the Government to transfer these teachers.

" I have been cited as a witness, or having witnessed a certain scene. I do not think that all the blame could be thrown at the door of the teachers who were present, because, the function was mainly organised by the Mover of the resolution as one of the conveners, and he did it after having obtained permission to occupy the school building and the premises. I do not think that it was the duty of the headmaster to go there and see that there was order in the meeting. If he did so, it would have been very irrelevant Again to say that because it happened in the school, either the teachers or the boys are responsible, is a very irresponsible attack.

" Of course, the teachers are transferred whenever it is found that by retaining them in the same school, it does not serve the interests of the school...I do not condone any disrespectful behaviour to the public. But if people think that the teachers are creatures with no self-respect and try to down-trod them, and they still try to maintain their self-respect, I do not think there is anything against it, and that is a thing that is appreciated.

" Some instances have been mentioned about the

students' misbehaviour. I think the hon. Mover is aware of the sort of times, and if there is such a feeling among the students, it is mostly the elders that are to blame. For, I should think they set the example by showing methods of disobedience. As the Mover himself pointed out, there was a case of misbehaviour on the part of the boys. They have not been condoned. They have been punished

"I again say that I am not against transfers But there would be no reason to transfer..... because some among the public do not like them, not because their work at school is not satisfactory, but in their private dealings they have had private quarrels That is a wrong principle, and I should be opposed to transfer anybody on those grounds"

After this several members rose up and spoke in support of the resolution. One of them said as follows :—

"The teachers ought to know that they are teachers.....They must set moral example to the students wherever they are.... After all, it was such an auspicious day viz. Gandhi Jayanti Day. The reason might be that some might have been provoked. Well, I can understand if an ordinary man, without much culture, getting annoyed and behaving like that, but certainly not the teachers..... I support the resolution saying that the teachers should be transferred."

Among others who spoke in favour of the resolution, Kittur Mallappa was one who said that, "these teachers should be sent to some other institutions .. so that the atmosphere will be cleared of all misunderstandings." Two or three members spoke against the resolution, and

finally the Mover of the resolution himself spoke for the second time, and he said as follows :—

“.....The hon'ble Member in charge of Education was trying to speak of the honour and other things of the High School teachers. May I ask one question whether he himself did not flout the honour of the District Board teachers by getting behind their backs and breaking open the doors? Was it not flouting their honour?.....”.

Pattada Uthayya :—“ Mr. President, Sir, I should rather be unwilling to make further comments on the speeches made on the resolution, and the debate seems to have lowered itself to such a pitch that it has become a mere personal squabble”.

Niddemane Somanna :—“ I take serious exception to the remarks made by the hon'ble Member.”

The hon'ble the President :—“ He has not referred to any one member in particular ”.

Niddemane Somanna :—“ I should think it is an insult to the whole House ”.

Ivor Bull :—“ I do not feel insulted at all, Sir ” (laughter).

Pattada Uthayya :—The Mover in his concluding remarks said that if I championed the cause of the students and the teachers of the High School, why I did not champion the cause of the teachers of the District Board and why I went behind their backs and broke open the doors of the schools? I should like to know whether that was not personal? I should even go further and say where were the teachers? Were they behind the backs of somebody? Why does Mr. Somanna champion their cause? The whole thing is

plain, that what I spoke in that connection is justified. They were being backed up and they were behind the backs of some people".

In fine, this was what happened about the 'incident' of the Gandhi Jayanti Day and in effect at the sessions of the Legislative Council. When the Education Officer said that, "for such a feeling among the students, it is mostly the elders that are to blame," he was perfectly correct.

It is definitely harmful if persons "taking interest in matters political" and yet get certified as of 'high thinking' are brought into the school campus. Personally I was the one who was vehemently opposing to get such fellows into the school compound. It is with the same idea that the educators kept even the "responsible officials of the Administration" and other leaders out of the school from lecturing on politics. In fact, the Central High School worked perfectly in order. Troubles arose only when people "with no academic qualifications as such" and party workers or their stooges, sneaked in to spoil the morale of the students, and that was a common sight everywhere, and, after all, that was what happened on that occasion.

52. A LITERARY SOCIETY WITHOUT LITERATURE

In March 1947, I took a few days' leave and left for Trichinopoly stating that I wanted to appear for an examination. I had already paid the examination fees but I was in no mood to sit for the examination. Anyway I went there, relaxed for some time sitting at the banks of the wider and soft-flowing Kaveri and returned.

A year before that in 1946, I had expressed my wish to resign from the job that I held in Coorg, and take up one in Madras. I tried hard to get one. My application had carried strong recommendations of the then Chief Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner and the Education Officer. A friend of mine wrote about me to Gen. Cariappa who was then a Brigadier, and, he in turn, recommended my name to the Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University Laxmanaswami Mudaliar. The latter wrote to Brig. Cariappa explaining the position as existed then. It was then I came in close contact with Prof. Mariappa Bhat of Madras University and Rao Saheb Kodandera Chengappa I.F.S., who was then in Madras. Thus, as I tried for a job elsewhere, the rumour that I had already resigned was already there for some time.

On the 15th of August 1947, the independence day, I was away from the scene about which I had already stated in the pages behind. That dawn of independence of the country was a sickening thing to me. Only some politicians and some opportunists in the country must have enjoyed over that freedom that we got. I was not happy. I repeat that I was sorry to see the British go. They had no business, I feel, to leave the country after achieving so much, and with so much still to be achieved. India and almost all the backward countries of the world should have preserved the colonial rule for some time more on some conditions. The 'natives' saying that they themselves would rule was just a joke and that was exactly what it appeared like during these two decades of their performance not only in India but even in good many other countries also.

Reverting to my 'story', since the Karnataka Sangha ceased to function for some time because all its prominent members seemed to have been hurt, I had no alternative but start an organization known as "Progressive Literary Society", and eventually I got myself elected as its President. By that time I had known that those top officials as Presidents of such bodies were only exploiting those positions thrust on them and then expecting others to work for them. We had taken for ourselves many activities under the auspices of the 'Society' but we were short of funds. Some of us including Biddanda Poovayya (Pollibetta) went round collecting funds but it melted too quickly because of some 'bandicoots' also joining us. The objectives of the Society were made known through the local papers and leaflets. It was explained clearly as follows :

" This is intended for the information . . . that this society is started.... .. to encourage the love of literature in Kannada, Hindi, Urdu and other languages and fine arts, and to enlist sympathy, support and willing co-operation of all those who are keenly interested in 'this movement.'"

" This is not designed to come in conflict with any other kindred movements that exist in Coorg today but will, on the contrary, serve as a valuable adjunct to all such associations——".

The last sentence was a caution to the Karnataka Sangha people who were then very busy with their propaganda against this new Organization, and a couple of those leading members even carried their discomfiture to the extent of informing the Chief Commissioner about this Progressive Literary Society. Writing an article in November 1947 in

both the local papers, the Secretary of the Karnataka Sangha, a lawyer by profession, said that some of their own active members including that of the Sahitya Parishat, had organised another Society which was quite unnecessary, and, he appealed to them to get back to the Karnataka Sangha which was equally broad-based, and that all the contemplated programme could be carried out through that, and so on.

This criticism was aimed at me as I was the only man who defected from the Karnataka Sangha although I was still a member of the Karnataka Sahitya Parishat.

We had asked the Assistant Commissioner to be the patron of the Society, and then decided to request the Chief Commissioner to inaugurate the same. I sent a non-Kodava member of the Society to personally request the Chief Commissioner to do so and also to explain the whole thing to him. I didn't go because by that time, he had heard too much about me and about this new Society, and my 'friend' who was sent to him found the old man fully informed of the subject, and later it was learnt that the Superintendent of Police Nellamakkala Subbayya had conveyed to him some good reports about the new literary society. Nevertheless, the Chief Commissioner made certain enquiries about that and asked the man who had been to him as below :

" Who is the President ? "

" Vidwan Muthanna ".

" How do you know him ? "

" We're friends, and we have been working together ".

" Do you know him very well ? "

" Yes, Sir. "

" I heard some rumours about this Literary Society ; is it true ? "

" If those are adverse reports, it's not true, Sir. "

The ' friend ' explained to him the whole thing and the older man was convinced, and then agreed to inaugurate the same on the 6th December 1947. We arranged to get up the function elaborately and sent many letters and invitations. We received good many messages of good wishes, and one of them was from R.K. Shanmukham Chetty, then Finance Minister, Government of India. He said in his message, dated the 29th November 1947, as follows :

"... I have always taken some interest in the affairs of Coorg. The people of Coorg are a homogenous community, and it should be comparatively more easy to create an interest in literature and cultural activities in such a community. I wish your Society all success."

At the meeting, the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa who was the patron of the Society, in his opening speech explained the objectives of the Society. Among the other speakers, Biddanda Kushalappa spoke in English, Khan Bahadur Abdul Rahman Khan spoke in Urdu and B. Shankara Bhat of Mangalore in Kannada. This last named gentleman, on arrival in Mercara, was prejudiced against the new Literary Society by the people of the Karnataka Sangha, stating that this new Society was a hoax. Much of what they told him was against me. But all that was of no use because soon after that he was given an excellent report about me by G. M. Rama Rao, the retired Education Officer, who said, in the words of Shankara Bhat, as

follows :

“ Those people unnecessarily talk nonsense because they can't do the work that others are doing. I know Muthanna very well. He is a good boy and also a very sincere worker.”

That was alright for me ; a good certificate from an unexpected quarter. Now what Dewan Bahadur Chengappa said inaugurating the new Literary Society, was interesting. He made a moving reference to the public behaviour of the time. He said :

“ It is very sad to see that public morale should come down so low. Everywhere people are seen accusing or talking ill of each other and doing nothing. In that they did not even spare me. I have been told that there is a Karnataka Sangha here, but in the interest of the development of various languages it would be better we had a broad – based Committee and see that they work harmoniously without any political or communal interests involved in it. People only start Organizations but they forget to work in order to achieve the objectives. I offer my fullest sympathy and support to this new Literary Society.”

One of the objectives of Society was that of starting a literary magazine. The journal was named as ‘ Prabhat ’. Articles in Kannada, English and a few in Urdu poured in, and we went ahead with the work. The coloured cover page was got printed in Mangalore and the Urdu articles in Mysore. The rest of the matter was got printed in the two presses of Coorg. All this seemed to be a funny thing but it was also a laborious affair. The first issue of the

magazine was out with this kind of experience. We were able to enlist about 250 subscribers to begin with in addition to the funds that we had already collected. For some time everything went on well, but I had a hell of the time also at the same time. Thus the literary society continued to be lively for a moment and the cynics and hecklers were silenced.

The 1947 session of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat was held in Kasaragode with Tatachar Sharma presiding over the occasion. It seemed to have been also a political Parishat with the United Karnataka Conference also taking place along with that. Many politicians from Coorg and elsewhere attended that and the proceedings were lively. On the second day some of the delegates had opportunity to speak and I was one of them. I was made one of the members of the Committee of the Progressive Writers' Club of Karnataka, and I continued to be a member of the Committee representing Coorg in the Sahitya Parishat.

53. SURVEYED THE INDIAN LANDSCAPE

I got an official letter informing me about a conference of the Kannadigas who lived outside the Karnataka area and in different parts of the country, and that conference that year to be held in Benares. I thought that that would be a fine opportunity for me to go to North India on behalf of this new literary society, and, therefore, I moved the subject with some of my friends. They too encouraged my going there, and soon about four of us, the members of the Committee met, and sanctioned some amount from the Society for my trip. But then I had to take leave from

the school for at least a fortnight's time. The Christmas examination had just been over and the S.S.L.C. selections were also announced. I had no important duty as such in the school at that time.

I brought this idea to the notice of the headmaster, Biddanda Kushalappa, who was also a member of our Magazine committee. He had been a silent admirer of mine all along but now he had to express some bitter truth. He said that I was taking a bold step on everything that I might think of. He appreciated the idea of my going to Benares, but added, "You see, Muthanna, there are, there are people..... who don't want you."

He was quite right. I agreed and passed off the topic to something else as I could see his genuine feelings for me. He said that he had no objection to my going. After that, of course, I had only to pack up my baggage.

My first journey towards the North twenty-three years back was an exciting experience. The third class travel in the train was awful as the train crossed the Vindhyas. I reached Benares in the night and spent the time in a hotel. The next day morning I went to the Benares Hindu University in search of Dasannachar, Professor of Physics, and who was the moving spirit of the Kannada Parishat there. Many delegates had already arrived, and I joined them. The proceedings went on for two days and I took a very active part in it.

On the third day some of us motored to Saranath, the Buddhist centre, and in the night, fortunately a moon-light night, we roved over the Ganga in a boat and it was enjoyable. During the day time whenever we were free, we went around the city and especially the bathing ghats

and the temples. Kalammayya, an ex-official of the Coorg Education department, was there leading an ascetic life. At the Hindu University, I called on Kamala Achayya, since married to a non-Coorg; she was a lecturer there at that time.

On the fourth day, after bidding good-bye to our host, Dasannachar, I left for Allahabad where I stayed for about six to eight hours. There I went round the Triveni Sangama, Anand Bhavan, Kamala Nehru Hospital and others places. I visited the military area, and Brig. Cheppudira Ponnappa was there. I also called on Miss Codanda Poovayya who was a Principal of a Girls' College there, and she fed me with very useful information of the place as well as with nice food.

That night I left for Delhi, but broke my journey at the inevitable Agra. Among the various things, of course, the Taj Mahal, was the most excellent thing that I saw anywhere. I viewed the Taj from different angles. I went round and round the monument both inside and outside. The sculpture and architectural charm moved me so much that I didn't feel like leaving the place soon, and with great reluctance I left the place after spending more than two hours.

Finally I reached Delhi in the early hours of the morning of the 28th January 1948. It was very cold, and luckily, and most unexpectedly I got a Coorg friend there; Someyanda Belliappa who relieved me off the fatigue, and with whom I rested for half-a-day. In the afternoon he took me round. Cheppudira Poonacha was also there. I visited Bolakaranda Cariappa who was surprised to find that I was a young man, while he was, he said, under the

impression that I was an old fellow as he had heard my name and read my articles even ten years prior to that. After spending some time with him we proceeded along the busy areas of the city. In the evening we went to the Birla House to attend the prayer meeting of Gandhiji, but as we were going, the meeting had almost terminated and the old man had just walked in.

Later I implored his Secretary to allow me in to have a Darshan of Gandhiji, but then he was as helpless as myself because of the crowd everywhere, both inside and outside. Later both of us walked along the right wing of the house and stood near a window through which we could see the old man very clearly and from a distance of only three or four yards. We saluted him with folded hands and he received that and went on with his files. We stood there for some time watching him working and also talking to the people.

After that I had nothing more to see in Delhi, and that night I took the train for Bombay where I stayed with Iychettira Ganapathy. That evening on the 30th January 1948, at about five'o clock, when we were on the streets strolling along, we heard the tragic news of Gandhiji's assassination, and for one or two hours, the radios went on announcing repeatedly the news with more and more details of the tragedy, from every house and every corner of every street and every lane all over. My ears would not believe the news at all for a long time and finally I reconciled myself to the news after we heard Nehru's broadcast at 8'o clock that night.

The next day I could see the whole city in sorrow, confusion, demonstration, mourning procession and

communal tension. I would not leave the city back to Coorg till we were assured of the safety to travel because of the trouble everywhere. In the meantime, I took the opportunity of visiting some of the Kodavas and the Kannadigas in the city, enrolled a few of them as subscribers to the magazine, and also saw the situation then existed in the city as an aftermath of Gandhiji's death.

Later on, the fourth day, I took the train for Bangalore. At Poona I had to change the train, and, as I alighted with my luggage in my hand, somehow to my great surprise, I found that some money which was in my trousers' pocket missing. That gave me a rude shock as I had not at all lost till then a single pie due to carelessness.

Luckily some chips that was in my inner pocket, saved me for the rest of my journey and I reached Bangalore alright. As I reached Mercara, I was almost like a walking newspaper when everybody took interest in asking me for the news. Most of them wanted to know if I was held up at Delhi on the eve of Gandhiji's assassination and how I was able to travel all the way. I gave a lucid account of all what I did and all that I saw, and then took upon arranging for the second issue of the magazine, dated the the February 1948. In that I gave a fuller account of my travel and about the situation of the country of the day. That travel afforded me a wealth of ideas when I could also see with my own eyes the enormous rich and vast landscape of the country all along and with great interest.

54. "PEOPLE-FEVER, AND FEVER-PEOPLE"

Dewan Bahadur C. T. Mudaliar took charge of the

office of the Chief Commissioner of Coorg in March 1948. He first came to Virajpet and stayed there for a day. I happened to be there on that day and went to see him and say that I was so and so. But, the local Subedar told me that he was not receiving any visitors as he had not yet taken charge of his duties.

Yes, I thought that it was too much on my part to see him then. Later, after two weeks I wrote to him a letter with a copy of the magazine, and he immediately sent a reply of good wishes to the magazine along with a message to the Literary Society. That was an act of encouragement on his part, and from that time onwards, he was helpful to me in all our activities.

Adult literacy campaign was one of our major programmes but in this I had to work single-handed as there was no one interested in things of the sort. I tried to enlist support of the school students and went round delivering speeches about the subject, and once with a friend of mine, in his motor cycle, we covered three places, Ponnampet, Virajpet and Napoklu in one day. We addressed the students with an idea of mobilising their support but all those things were of no avail and it just appeared like pouring water on duck's back.

Anyway I prepared a scheme to that effect and submitted that to the Government, and also published the same in the magazine, 'Prabhat.' I got the literature concerning the Adult Literacy and distributed them to some of the schools and talked about the need of fostering the programme. The Chief Commissioner Mudaliar appeared to be taking keen interest on all such matters. He had by then started to carry on the administration

from the headquarters to villages and thus showed his interest in the welfare of the backward people. I tried to avail of that opportunity in my field of activities as well, and I did not spare any money but spent a good amount on the schools that I had started. The number of those schools rose up from the initially started three to ten in all in about six months. The Kodagu Weekly of the 2nd July 1948 wrote an editorial supporting the scheme and made special mention of the three schools that were started in Mercara, Sirangala and Polibetta which were then working satisfactorily, and, were also visited by the authorities. The first started six schools were supplied with slates, books, paper etc to begin with. Arameri, Biligeri and Chenankote schools were the others that worked very well for sometime.

That seemed to have been a mad venture of mine when no one was interested in such a project. But it was heartening to see many illiterate people taking to it seriously and learning to read and write after attending to those night schools regularly. More they showed an interest towards learning the three R's, more enthusiastic I became in conducting those schools. I had a few teachers of the localities concerned who were earnest in their work in spite of a very small amount paid to them as their salary every month.

I have walked many times, sometimes very long distance, in the night-time, to see how those schools functioned, and that was an exhilarating experience.

Very few people such as Gundukutti Manjunathayya, Ivor Bull and Apparanda Thimmayya donated money for petromax lights to the schools which were in their vicinity

and thus relieved our burden to some extent. Public functions were conducted at these centres to educate the people, and C. M. Rama Rao, the retired Education Officer too, offered his co-operation to this work by himself attending to functions conducted at Arameri, Galibeedu and such interior places. The Education Officer visited some of these schools in the night-time and left excellent reports. On the 3rd September 1948, he visited a night-school and was surprised to see a large number of adults, the labour class people, attending the school, and he left a good record after thoroughly inspecting the class, and reported about the school to the Chief Commissioner, who also visited some schools and appreciated the work done. On the 12th September 1948, he visited Pollibetta Adult School, at 7'O clock in the evening when a large number of people also had gathered. Later, he congratulated me for the "good work" that I was doing.

On the Gandhi Jayanti Day of the 2nd October 1948, a colourful function was got up at the Mercara Adult School. I had requested the Chief Commissioner to preside over the function, and he had agreed. Leaflets about the function were widely distributed. The President of the Municipality, K. Mallappa, saw to the arrangements and he got the entire area neat, and he attended the function as well. On that day morning the Chief Commissioner sent me a note in which he said that he "was suffering from fever" and that he was sorry that he had "to deprive himself of the pleasure of being present", and suggested my asking the Assistant Commissioner to preside over the function in his stead.

This was a disappointing thing to the Harijans of the

locality, many of whom were the students of the adult literacy class. They expressed their desire to see the Chief Commissioner himself preside over the function. Therefore, that evening, I made a last bid to get him after informing the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa of the fact.

I went to the 'Beauvoir', now the 'Sudarshana', where he was staying. I walked in straight to his room when I found him as though suffering fever and warmly clothed. I told him the people were waiting for him, particularly the harijans. I also said that a large number of people among the public were also there, and that they would be very happy if he showed himself for five minutes. Thus, as I was telling him the people's desire to see him attend, his wife suddenly appeared on the scene and protested at his going out and exposing himself to the wind in the night-time. I pleaded with her stating that a large number of people were waiting for the Chief Commissioner, and if he did not go the people would be disappointed.

I did a great job in stressing all the time the word 'people' and for some time I played the role of a crooked politician in emphasising the word 'people' every time. It was then I knew that the word 'people' had a magic effect. The man finally agreed to come for a few minutes just to please 'people'. Thus, my mission was a success. The dark coloured man got up and wore a darker coloured coat and made his room still darker. He slowly walked out and I was with him as though escorting the man with fever very carefully out to the wind. As I was telling him that the 'people' would be very happy to see him, the Superintendent of Police, Subbayya, came there in a jeep.

He seemed to have been a bit nervous and said, "fever, fever, Sir, fever Sir," when I added to that, "people, people, Sir, waiting Sir," Saying thus we got into the jeep and reached the place.

By this time the crowd was really big for a small road-side Harijan colony. We alighted from the jeep, and I took the sick man straight to the pendal and to the Harijan temple which was decorated for the occasion. Chief Commissioner Mudaliar was pleased, and by that time he had almost forgotten about his fever. Later he took his seat and I introduced him to the 'people' saying that he was there in spite of his fever because of his love for the 'people'. He spoke for about five minutes, expressed his appreciation for the work we had done, and left the place.

Later the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa occupied the chair. In his opening speech he remarked that he did not at all know that there was a school like that just in the vicinity of his official residence, and that he knew only when the Chief Commissioner had informed him of that. I shrewdly noted and under-lined this remark because I thought that it was an insinuation on my work. It also made me think that he was offended at my not asking him to preside over the function instead of requesting the one with fever to be there.

Among the speakers, Niddemane Somanna was one who had something to say about adult education although he knew nothing about that. The Education Officer Uthayya gave the official view of the programme. The chairman finally delivered his concluding speech.

With all this, the 'fever and people' episode did not

end. I had to propose a vote of thanks to the Chairman, speakers and others, who had graced the occasion in such a large number. While doing so, I appeared to be a mad man again. The first time I was mad like that was during the same Gandhi Jayanthi day two years before that in 1946. Now again I made a reference to the remarks of the Chairman who said that he had not at all known of the existence of that school. I said that :

“ Gentlemen, the Chairman said that he did not know about this school, but I regret to say that ours is a small school. This school for adults, works only in the night-time (laughter). Our resources are poor ; we work in the late hours of the evening (Laughter) We have no bell to ring like the big high school bell—the sound of which is heard all over the town.....”

This kind of retort, but softly spoken, was considered too much, and most of the people who had gathered thought something wonderful about me. Most of them appreciated but at the same time wondered how I could express such a thing against one of the chief officers of the then province. But I was not in the least perturbed. I went back to my room and had a sound sleep thinking that the whole function went on very well.

But what was heartening to see was the reaction of the Assistant Commissioner Uthappa. When I was speaking as above, he laughed away the whole thing. He joined the others in taking the whole thing as a joke. In that way he was a sport. He did not take things seriously and that was apparent when I saw him after a few days. But in his heart of hearts he had felt offended, and that I can say from the fact that the very next day

after the meeting, he conveyed the news to the Chief Commissioner. But that's all.

The adult schools, about half-a-dozen of them were well-conducted, and those continued to work till I exhausted myself of all the resources that I could put on them, and as long as the Government went on affording their lip sympathy only for the scheme. I went to the Chief Commissioner and told him to take the schools or ask some agencies to run them. The Education Officer wrote after visiting some schools the same thing in his letter dated the 22st October 1948, No. 3516/48. In reply to that, the Government wrote to me on the 10th November 1948, No. 8/2/1488/48, stating that :

" Your letter of the 8th September 1948.....A scheme for the education of the adults may be prepared.....and placed before the meeting of the leaders and other prominent men.....A non-official committee to work out the scheme may be constituted for the purpose".

From the above letter I thought that the Government was taking the suggestions regarding the adult education scheme seriously, and, therefore, I drafted a scheme and also offered my co-operation to call for a public meeting in order to discuss the subject. As a result, in another circular letter of the 15th November 1948, No. B/2/1488/48, the Chief Commissioner wrote addressing the general public as follows :—

" As you are well aware, the question of adult education has become a very important subject of late.....Adult education is quite necessary if adult franchise is to become a successSome private

schools are started by the enthusiastic public, and the Progressive Literary Society is taking keen interest in the matter. The President of the Society has requested me to call for a meeting of the leading persons in Coorg in order to discuss and to draw up a proper scheme.....and to set up a small advisory Committee I have therefore arranged to hold a meeting..... on the 2nd December 1948, at 11 a.m. at the Council Hall, Mercara..... "

This meeting was held as announced with a large number of people from all over Coorg attending and taking part in the proceedings for more than two hours. It must be recorded, however, that I was the only one to argue vehemently to set up a Committee and expedite the working of the scheme and thus continue the schools that were already started. But that meeting also proved to be just like any other meeting and without any effect whatsoever. After that my activities in that respect slowly cooled down.

PART VI

BOOK

56. MANY THINGS AT A TIME

I had no time to write any book in those days, and even a few small ones that I had produced were just a trash. But then they were useful for me to know the critical as well as the prejudicial reaction of the people.

For the first time in 1948, I published a collection of Kannada poems of about 100 pages. Some copies were sold out soon after it was put into sale. Ananthapadmanabha Rao told me that if the binding and the wrapper of the book had been attractive, more copies would have been sold. He was quite right.

Among the reviews on this small book "Suryakanti", I must refer to the one appeared in the PRAJAMATA, a Bangalore Weekly of the 25th April 1948. The reviewer found the entire book useless from the top to bottom. Below that half-a-column review there was his name, i.e. R. S. Rama Rao.

I didn't know this man nor do I know him even today. The reason for his blasting of the book was my 'preface' in which I allowed myself to say something about the writers and about the politicians. The gentleman could have straight-away rebutted those points because they were the points that were controversial. He didn't do that, and, on the other hand, he found it handy to criticise every line of my compositions. Well, that was that.

But then the interesting thing had yet to come. Exactly after a year on the 24th April 1949, the same PRAJAMATA Weekly carried another half-a-column-length of review on the same book, and there the reviewer seemed to have been appreciating my book saying that the poems were really good. But he did not write his name this time. Was it the same man who wrote the review on the previous year? May be, himself.

Whoever he may be, I would call this kind of writing as mischief. This hide and seek game in the literary field, and the newspapers publishing such things are all a kind of literary blackmail. Anyway, from that day, I stopped taking any review seriously even if they were appreciative in character.

I must also say something about the magazine 'Prabhat'. I was the editor, printer and publisher of the same. The first issue was out in January 1948. On the 15th March 1948, the Chief Commissioner in his letter No. 3382-63-48 permitted me to edit the magazine subject to the condition that the work did not interfere with my legitimate duties in the school. A month later on the 15th April 1948, I declared before the District Magistrate under Section 5, of the Press and Registration of Book Act 1867, stating that I was the editor, and the register number was M 5134. As months passed on, the number of subscribers increased with more and more articles pouring in.

The printing of the magazine was done in different presses which were not very kindly towards this magazine. Consequently I was also the recipient of registered letters for the payment of the printing cost in time. Those who gave advertisements to the magazine were also not regula

in their payment, so much so, I had almost become a broke in about a year of its running, and the only alternative before me was to stop it unceremoniously. A few people who had donated some considerable amount towards the magazine were also disappointed, but no one could do anything to revive that.

Immediately after the mine was dead, one of my friends and a namesake, took a fancy to start a journal. He asked me if he could succeed in his venture, and I gave him my candid opinion against his going into a job like that in a place of that sort. He was not staying in Mercara but in a smaller town of about 3500 people in those days. I explained to him the difficulties that I had to experience in several ways.

But my friend and namesake did not believe me, nor did he take my advice seriously. He thought, as he later admitted, that I was discouraging him. He started his journal and called it "Satyarti", but that "Satyarti" could not get even fifty subscribers for many months. He continued his work for some more months as he had his own small printing press but he had his share of headache very soon.

My friend struggled up to the seventh issue of the magazine. He told me after passing on the copy of that issue stating that he had then not only the headache but also the back-ache. With his head resting on his hand, at the same time, he admitted that he had not believed me when I had told him of running a magazine like that relying upon the people who would supply just the free testimonials and party labels and nothing else. He pursued his work to get up a few more issues for some more months

but then he remembered the warning that I had given him, and consequently his enthusiasm waned and his magazine died. That poor gentleman's headache aggravated, rather fatally, and he succumbed to that after a couple of years.

A friend, colleague, and one of my family, was working with me as a teacher in the same school in Mercara. That man used to come to the school every day by his motor cycle from his house about fifteen miles away. He was not a steady rider and he had already had some fatal warnings apart from the warning of some ordinary folks like me. But then he continued to drive to the school. On a certain day at four'o clock, he had his tea with me and then together we went up to the bus-stand, and from there he took leave of me and proceeded in his motor cycle. Within half-an-hour or so, I was told while I was still in the town that he had succumbed to an accident to which he got himself involved after a rude dash against a government van that was coming from the opposite direction.

There was also a joke here. After the above incident, I got another news stating that I too was dead. Then I started thinking how after all I was not dead. There is an interesting episode here. A few months prior to that, I happened to be in a village where an old lady told me that some days before that she had heard the news that I was dead, and that she had almost started to my funeral. But she was held back from proceeding by someone as they thought to verify the news first. She also told me that if she had gone all the way with a white saree and in a mourning style, she would have been damn fooled. That's the way how some people try to send others to the hell.

I had requested the Government in 1946 to introduce the Kodava dances like Bolakaat in Coorg schools as one of the subjects to be taught under physical education. That letter revolved round a red-tape in the offices of the Chief Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner and the Education Officer, and nothing happened at last. I took the thread again and tried to get a few young men trained in those dances under the auspices of the Literary Society, and to that effect I gave a notification in the Kodagu Weekly of the 21st April 1949, asking the intending learners to apply. In spite of notifying that a stipend of Rs. 5/- would be paid per week for every trainee and so on, the response was poor. I had taken some amount of interest in getting the girls trained in *Ummathaat* and this I did in the schools where I worked even from the year 1942.

The Education Officer Pattada Uthayya retired from service in November 1948, and the very last letter that he signed on the last day of his in office was the order of my confirmation in service. He was succeeded by Biddanda Kushalappa.

Somehow those were the days when I had little time to rest or relax. Once two or three friends of mine dragged me to the Club in Mercara and forced me to become a member of the same. They were keen on having me there as a member, and, in order to fulfil their requests, I did indeed become one paying Rs. 15/- as membership and other charges. That was no doubt a big amount to me those days. Anyway what I saw at the Club disgusted me. Most of those gentlemen were playing cards and a good many of them, of course, gambled heavily; some others were going round the billiards tables, and a few

older men sat in remote corners and were reading the months-old newspapers. Smoking and drinking and gambling and gossiping were all their pastime which they might call by the name recreation. I was there on that day and went there once again after two days and then swore that I would never go there. But then I had taken ~~up~~ to d^bbling not in one but in many things at a time. Therefore, wasting time in clubs in evenings, was evidently an inconve^hient thing for me.

In October 1948, I joined Tatachar Sharma, President, Kannada Sahitya Parishat, and one Ramaachar, on a tour of Karnataka, and we covered some places in the Western region. That was an interesting activity. The Parishat met our travelling expenses only. Ramaachar was giving fine recitals of Kannada songs and poems, and I used to speak on Kannada literature and at some places on Goorg folk-songs, culture etc.

During our tour of South 'Kanara, we stayed in Udipi for a day or two, and I am reminded to state that Ananthapadmanabha Rao was also there to attend some Kannada literary programme. He took me to visit some places in the town and as we were going to the Sri Krishna temple, he passed on his *Dhoti* to me and told me to throw it over my back and shoulders so that I could look like a devoted Brahmin Archaka. Evidently the non-Brahmins were not allowed inside the temple, and my friend escorted me intelligently. That lecture tour afforded me a stimulating experience. Our concluding programme was in Mangalore and later we returned to Mercara through Kasargode, where we stayed with friends, some leading politicians. Tatachar Sharma and others sat

almost throughout the night listening to wonderful music when they carried me to bed soon after it started at about twelve'o clock because I slept sitting on the chair the moments after they commenced their Veena, Tamboora and Tabla sounds. Anyway, I refrain from giving the details concerning me outside Coorg in order to minimise the scope and extent of this book.

57. GOING & COMING AND COMING & GOING

I had paid the fees to appear for my final examination in March 1949, and that was really my final attempt as well. This time I was serious and spent the last two months earnestly with my books. The first Part of the examination, English, was to be held on the 20th and the 21st March, and the third Part History, on the 30th and 31st of March. But I would not take this long leave of more than fifteen days to go all the way to Trichinopoly. All that I did was that I took casual leave for the first two examinations, went there, and returned, and again after a week I availed of another three or four days' leave, dashed again, wrote the examination and returned. The week-end days added to the casual leave were obviously beneficial. That was a grand feat which no one might have done anywhere under the circumstances and having been at such a distance between the two places. No one knew where I was going with this kind of casual leave although a few of my colleagues had guessed something of the sort knowing me as they did, as I had been disappearing from the school in the previous years with three or four days' casual leave just on the eve of the University examinations.

Many a time I had kept even my examination results as secret, not only when I happened to fail in the examinations but even when I had passed in parts, and that I had to do in order not to give room for others to think that I would be going again or disappearing from the school again for a few days either in September or March. That would obviously make them think that I was again on for some examinations. The cynics taking this kind of interest in me was certainly a source of disturbance to me and to all my studies and activities.

The results were out in the end of May 1949, and to my surprise and as well as of others, I had passed, and with that I had reached an important mile stone. Most of my senior as well as useless colleagues had to shut-up after that. Many a time I had challenged them on many issues and now most of them were simply put down. It was a sight for the gods to see. No one would even congratulate me, and on the other hand, they wondered when after all I could study and also appear for an examination. They would not think that my going and coming between Mercara and Trichinopoly was just like going and coming between Mercara and Virarajpet, and that was all.

Immediately after the results came, I reported the matter to the Chief Commissioner, and he too expressed his surprise. It was only then I thought that there was a need for some self-publicity, and therefore, I told Pandianda Belliappa to publish it in his paper, and that he did.

That did the trick alright. An esteemed old man who had known me, read the news. He was travelling by a bus and to which bus I too was waiting, and when he saw me on the road-side, he shouted at me stating, " Sit

on the bonnet, Muthanna". That was the way how he congratulated me. But that happened to be a very hot bonnet to sit.

Dewan. Bhadur C. T. Mudaliar has left his name in Coorg by his monumental achievement of founding the Arts & Science College in Mercara in 1949. Having been a qualified man to be a Kannada teacher there, I tried for the post, and some of my welwishers among the local politicians, and of both the then political parties, talked on my behalf to the Chief Commissioner although the latter never wanted to appoint any local men in the very first year of its opening because, he thought, that the new institution would lose its sanctity and importance if he did so. He was right in one way. He called me for a formal interview and he called a few others as well. Here I should say that if I had been accidentally picked up for the post, I would not have been a happy man there for many reasons, which I need not elaborate here.

After that to make a long story short, I should say that in 1949, I decided upon going to Madras to study for Law. Some of my colleagues in the school, perhaps, had known me better than I had known about myself. One of them said a year or two before that stating that I would not be there in Coorg for long. "Muthanna is just a bird of passage, you'll see that", said an elder person. He was right.

Prior to my going, the members of the staff gathered for what was called a farewell party for me, and just then a letter from the Principal of the Theosophical College, Madanapalle, got me very surprisingly a Kannada lecturer's job. That came even without my applying for the same.

I was in a dilemma after that whether to accept it or not.

On my way to Madras, I went to Madanapalle. The Principal of the college was away to Madras at that time. I went to Madras and joined the Law College as a student, and then secured a room in the Victoria Hostel. Later I went to Adyar to see the Principal of Madanapalle College. His name was B. R. Kumar, but that 'Kumaar' happened to be an old man. He told me that he would get back to Madanapalle and then inform me of the position.

Yes, he went back, and then sent me a telegram asking me to go there and join duty. Therefore, after attending the Law College for some weeks, I went to Madanapalle and worked there for some time. That college was fine, its environment congenial, staff and students friendly and I liked it very much. G. K. Chettur's celebrated lines "From Basanikonda's summit falls, a glory on the college walls", was true apart from poetry. Once there was a quarrel and a hand-to-hand fight between the groups of students of Andhra and those of the Kannada districts. I realised that the linguistic trouble had also its roots in the campuses of academic institutions.

I came to Coorg to adjust my leave from the school to the monsoon vacation and then again left for Madanapalle and worked there for some more days. During this time, I had to go to Madras once just to have a foot at the Law College. Principal Kumaar commented, 'Muthanna has made Madras his front door and Madanapalle the back door'. He was right. After a few days' teaching at Madanapalle, I left that place. Though my stay there was short, the staff and students were sorry that I was leaving. They arranged a farewell party, and also a meeting of the

Kannada association of the College with myself presiding over that, and the proceedings of which were published in *The Hindu* and other newspapers.

I spent the next six months in Madras. The financial problem was a perennial headache to me. I applied for a loan from the Coorg Teachers' Co-operative Society of which I was a member. My request was turned down by the rest of the teacher-members of the Committee stating that for the one studying for other than Education, they would not consider giving a loan from a society which was meant only for helping the teachers. That was Number One.

I applied to the Coorg Education Fund for a loan to which fund I too had contributed my mite. I had collected money for that fund on various occasions. In the Committee of that Fund there was a lawyer who was about twelve years senior to me. He had borrowed money from me many times on account of his very poor income as a lawyer. It was that man who suddenly had some headache to say that no special consideration need be shown to me by sanctioning a higher amount and that all applicants should be treated alike. That was Number Two.

My father wrote to me to collect the year's paddy money from the tenants at the Nad house, who had never paid to us the money regularly. However, I ventured to write to the fellows many letters to transfer the money to me. But those men who lived mostly by bragging and cheating others thought that to ignore all my letters was a better part of their valour instead of bothering to write to me, let alone sending me any money. This was Number Three.

In those days, and long before the L.I.C. came into

being, the insurance agents were a great menace to the people, especially to those who joined the Government or any kinds of service, anew. In 1942-43, half-a-dozen such agents descended on me like vultures with their fairy tale advice quoting all kinds of scriptures and with reference to their insurance guide books. Through all such stories they built a glorious future for me and they would not allow me go free. To a pest of that kind I agreed to insure for Rs. 2000, and I maintained that for five years by which time I got myself involved in many activities apart from my half-yearly trips to various University examinations. I don't remember whether I got the policy paid-up or allowed it to die by itself. To another vulture I gave a policy for Rs. 2000, and I continued to pay the premium for seven years. In October 1949, from Madras I wrote to the Company to make the policy a paid-up one and send me the amount. They took a long time to comply with my request and they paid only after I wrote to them a strongly worded letter. That was Number Four.

Apart from my salary that I got from Madanapalle, and half-salary I got from my school in Coorg, the unsold copies of my three or four small publications fetched me some money by the kindly help extended to me by the Education Officer in his letter No. 1002/4-7-1949, and that of the President of the District Board in his letter No. 3406/49. They saw that the copies were purchased to the use of schools of Coorg and that afforded some relief to me.

It was under such a situation that I spent my time in Madras. I gave the required attendance to the Law College and returned to Coorg to resume my duties as a

teacher in the end of February 1950. Coming away like this on the eve of the examination was certainly an unwise step, but could'nt help, and the result, as everyone had expected, was a failure. Was it a year wasted? Not at all. I made the best use of my stay in Madras about which I may state at a later stage.

During the time I was a law student, a very wonderful thing that I found was that for sometime I became a 'big' man. Everybody talked to me, everyone recognised me in the streets and also everyone talked about me. All those local officers were nice to me, offered me seat to sit when I went to them, served tea, and all of them became my welwishers over-night. In his letter of the 31st October 1949, my father informed me that on the occasion of the Chief Commissioner's visit to the village, the latter asked him whether he was "the father of Vidwan Muthanna who is studying for law", Yes, my father was pleased, and so did I. So what ?

When my examination results came, I was the first to announce those "inquisitive welwishers" that I had failed. That did not make any difference to me because it was I who had known my troubles and not the on-lookers. Cynics commented that it was an impossible feat for me to get through, and I in turn, gave them a derisive laugh and sympathised with their conclusions and evaluation of others.

It was my luck that Government of Madras had opened a Teachers' Training College in Mangalore just then in 1950. I availed of that opportunity to study for B.T., and this time I made Mercara my front door and Mangalore my back door. One of my elderly colleagues

sincerely encouraged me to take it up and he lent me some money all by himself and without my asking him. That was very kind of him.

I managed to get through this course as a student there and as a teacher here, and I travelled between these two places many times. The Principal Padukone Ramanand Rao was very considerate to me, and both as a teacher in Mercara and as a student in Mangalore at the same time, I gave a good impression of myself, and even for two or three years after I left, the staff members continued to cite me in their classroom lectures as an instance how one could earn and learn at the same time and in spite of odds.

I dabbled in too many things, and while in Mangalore, I delivered many public lectures. Back in Mercara at regular intervals, I was in the school in my own place as a teacher. In the college day celebrations at Mangalore, I took an active part and also a lively role in an English drama written by the Principal Ramanand himself.

During this hectic period, I extended my activities to the home front, cleared jungles, planted, and myself worked in the farms, and I did all this without resting or relaxing. As I had switched on to Education from Law, the cynics were again at work. The Karnataka Sangha of Mercara which was almost defunct for two or three years, called for a meeting on the 19th June 1950, 'to concert measures to revive the activities' of the Sangha. That was a strange thing to happen. They sent me also a letter because I was still considered a member of that society.

One of my so-called own men, a first class crook

unfortunately, sent another of my so-called own men, a fly in my ointment, to find out if at all there was a Teachers' Training College in Mangalore, or I was just bluffing. Both those fellows still think that I didn't know their vicious game. An ex-teacher of mine and later a colleague, on his visit to Mangalore, asked the college authorities how I was admitted in preference to others. That was the way he put in his case in order to secure a seat for his man. All these mischievous and even dangerous fellows retired as miserable failures and professionally almost condemned. Anyway, despite the men of the sort, my 'caravan' passed on taking no notice of such devils that were shadowing me.

It was while in Mangalore, I tried for a job at the Union Ministry of Information. I applied for the same and then wrote to Cheppudira Poonacha who was then going between Delhi and Coorg, to see in what stage it was. He wrote to me on the 6th August 1950, and that was a letter that is worth quoting. He said that :

"...the hon'ble Minister regrets that he cannot interfere (He makes me understand that he had talked to him) You will, I am sure, appreciate the difficulty (What difficulty ?) . . . But as you possess all the qualifications, I would advice you to put in your application and try." (An advice that nobody had given to me till then).

This man was and is a politician and every word of his and every grin and gesture is politically motivated. But what can be done? There are many others like him.

Though I completed the teaching course, some of us who had fallen short of the required attendance during the

year, were informed to take practical tests in Madras, and before obtaining the diploma. Therefore, in September 1951, I went to Madras and did the test "excellently". The three highly placed examiners of the University congratulated me and told me that I did very well. It so happened that in the Government Gazette of the month, it was found that I was the only candidate to pass in Second Class while all the rest could just get through the Pass class only. The examiners also wrote to the principal of the Training College that I had done "excellently" and the later in his letter of December 1951, informed me of my "very good performance". That was a matter of great satisfaction to me.

During this busy time of mine, I could confidently say that I affected some improvement at home after myself attending to the work in the fields and farms. But all that, as most of the projects of mine, proved to be a waste of money, waste of effort, waste of energy and waste of everything that I had planned and intended to do. But then I don't regret. I worked all that as prompted by my conscience and for the cause that I had believed as good. If I was not rewarded for that, I don't regret because my intentions were very far from the expectations of any reward. Certainly I look back at the past with some satisfaction, and there is pleasure in losing for causes turned out with the best of intentions, and I don't regret.

58. "COORG HISTORY" & TRIP TO JAIPUR

Years ago as a school student, I had already collected copies of almost all the local publications and articles

concerning Coorg. From 1937 to 1943, I wrote many articles concerning the history and culture of Coorg. I tried to get a copy of "Rajendraname", when I made a pointed reference to its non-availability as a public meeting in 1945, and in the presence of many officials. After that they conducted a search for the same and I got that too which I hold as merely the Raja's version of the 'story'.

From 1945 to 1949, I had collected books and gazetteers of Coorg and of the neighbouring districts written by the Europeans of the last century. In 1946-47 I surveyed those areas of the ancient battle fields and twice I went round the island of Srirangapatna where I spent a considerable time. Till 1949 I went on collecting all the available trash from the scrape-heap about Coorg, and those included the writings about Coorg in many of the Indian papers. The files and notes and the collection of records of mine became very thick by this time.

But the main part of my research concerning Coorg history was done in Madras in 1949-50. My stay in the city as a student of Law College turned me into a serious student of Coorg history. The sessions of the First Law class used to be in the morning hours only, and, therefore, the free hours of the afternoon, were used by me at the Connemora and University libraries. My room-mate in the Victoria Hostel left his cycle at my disposal to go to the college in the mornings and to the libraries in the afternoons. I gathered a good lot of material after going through the dust-ridden books, files and other valuable records, and the file of my notes on Coorg went up to an enormous bulk. A good lot of still unknown facts were revealed for the first time and I grabbed all such things

with great pleasure and profit. It is, therefore, I say that I have no regrets for all that had happened, be it the loss of money, or the cynicism of the people with which they fed me all along. I was thoroughly satisfied with what little I achieved.

From 1936 to 1950, a long period of fourteen years was really a long and steadfast effort to collect material from ever so many sources to fulfil the long-felt need, and also my dream of getting up a book on Coorg. Mine was just a labour of love and I did not spare any money, time or resources in fulfilling that enormous task that I took upon myself.

All that I collected till 1950, a large bundle of papers, note books, reference material, newspaper cuttings, extracts from ever so many sources, were all arranged and rearranged by me in a chronological order, and that I did mostly in Mangalore while I was at the training college. It took about six months to prepare a draft copy, all scribbled with my own hand and in a haphazard way. I did this while I was studying for an examination, working at the school and spending every week-end at the village jungle indulging in a work that was novel to me. I got about 150 pages of the draft printed at the Ambika Press, but the work did not satisfy me, and I thought that, that needed further touch up. Therefore, I stopped the printing of the stuff there. I didn't mind the waste of money that I incurred towards that printing and other expenses. I revised the whole draft and rearranged every chapter with fresh materials added to them. Very many sleepless nights were spent on bringing the whole stuff into a chronological and readable order.

In 1951, I began searching for funds to get the manuscript printed. I went round with a draft copy of the book to some rich men but none of them were helpful to me. They turned over the pages and then pretended as though they knew everything of that. Some money-bags, rich coffee planters, were behaving in a crude manner and their behaviour was pitiable. I shook up a couple of them and made them to beware of their responsibilities to the public. I could not but talk on occasions like that, for, after all, I knew what I was doing and not simply boozing and dozing like those fellows.

In October 1951 I came to know that the All India History Congress would meet at Jaipur. I applied to the Government to send me there as a delegate. This idea of mine, of just a Kannada teacher, was too much for those clerks there to swallow. The Chief Commissioner's Office wrote to me on the 4th December 1951, No. 16395, stating that, "he may attend the conference at his own expense, if he so desires". The letter was signed by Kuttu. This man was designated as the manager of the office, some times he was called a Secretary and sometimes a Superintendent, but the actual job that he was doing there was of a head-clerk. Anyway, Kuttu made use of the Government stationary to order people to spend their own money and he had no courage to use his discretion on how best the Government money should be used. He told me that they had received the circular of the Secretary of the History Congress to send a delegate, and added that his office wrote to them that there was no one in Coorg who could be sent as a delegate to such a conference.

Thus, Kuttu too did some administrative job. I had

known that the clerks at the Panchayat offices and of the village co-operatives also do many kinds of jobs and their tendency would always be to harm people, and they take delight in seeing that the poor people are troubled rather than being helped. I had my first experience of that kind as early as in 1941 at the hands of a clerk of district board office, and his name was Muddu, and Muddu like Kuttu, was a graduate of those days, and their mischievous way of writing on the files concerning poor people was wonderful. I shudder to think how many thousands there might be of that category of public servants on whose hands the responsible papers and files are being tossed about.

After doing a silly mischief in 1941, Muddu like Guggu, started hiding his head from me so soon afterwards in 1942. Anyway, it is not worth the mention here. But Kuttu's writing was nice. He wrote to History Congress in November 1951 that there was no one in Coorg who could be sent to such a conference. That man was simply thinking of me; he never thought about those history lecturers in the college or anyone else. Well, be it so.

I wrote to the Secretary, History Congress, that I would be going to Jaipur, and I be given an opportunity to read my paper on Coorg. He, in reply, welcomed me to the conference but not my paper, because, he said that I was too late to be included in such a programme.

With things like this, I also got involved in another programme, and, that was of my wedding. I thought that it was time for me to get coupled, and in about a month or so everything was arranged in a lightening speed. Here I should make mention of that amiable old man Pandanda Monnappa who put me in the track and talked over the

matter at his house for one whole night. What after all he talked spoiling everyone's sleep was a different matter. However, the programme was fixed up. Preparations for conducting the wedding in the traditional way with night-long procedure was carried out, and the lorry that carried my things and purchases from Mercara was the first vehicle to go right near the door-step of my village house, and for the first time, through the road that was tracked by myself, and mostly with my own hand while I was working in the jungle some months prior to that. My parents were sure that after all I was going to marry.

And then marriage ! Three and half days casual leave was all that I took, and it was a success, and was well attended in spite of the day being a Wednesday. The amount of cash gift that I got satisfied me but about 80 to 90 telegraphic greetings pouring in for two or three days, was certainly a loss to me and a profit to the postal department. The money those friends spent on telegrams could have been diverted to me in cash and that would have been a great relief, and that was what I felt.

Immediately after the wedding, I left for North India with my wife. We travelled through Bombay, stayed there for a half a-day, prayed at the temple of Ambarnath, and then left for Jaipur that evening. The first thing that I did after my arrival there was to contact the officials of History Congress. I introduced myself to them but they could not give me any assurance on affording an opportunity to read my paper.

Well, what man can't do luck can do. That afternoon, just five minutes before the sessions of the History Congress, the Secretary informed me that although my name could

not be included in the agenda, he had kept the copy of my paper in the top of the piled up papers submitted to the President of the conference, and there was a probability of the President calling me first to read my papers.

Yes, I thanked God for what took place mysteriously and then took my seat somewhere in the hall. The President, that renowned historian, Dr. Sardesai, then about 86 years old, took the Chair. True, my paper was on the top and it was I who read the paper first. It was indeed a success.

My theme on Coorg history seemed at the outset as very vague but I had crystallised the whole thing into five or six foolscap pages and dealt with the main incidents beginning from 1790 to 1860. I read it alright within the allotted time, and as I concluded there was cheers and applause, and I felt that my performance was a great success.

After that some great historians of the country read their papers. They were really great, but their subjects were dry, and those consisted mostly of dull details, and most of them read their papers in an unimpressive style, and their thesis were mainly of academic interest.

The sessions ended at about 5-30 p.m., and soon after that there was a garden party, attended by the Maharaja and Maharani of Jaipur, the State ministers and the elite of the city. I too joined the party and went round among the delegates when several of them congratulated me for my paper and many of them made inquiries about me. I told them that I was only a language teacher of a high school and I attended the session at my own cost. That was 'certainly wonderful', they said, and then appreciated.

my energy and drive, and encouraged me to pursue my work. Just then the Secretary of the History Congress came to me and took a copy of my paper stating that they would make use of that in some publications.

After that I had nothing to do there. Next day morning after posing for a group photograph, we left Jaipur for Agra, and that was my second visit to the Taj which seemed to me again new, and every aspect of the sculpture appeared to me as though I was seeing it for the first time. From Agra we descended straight to Madras.

After returning to Coorg, I resumed my work in the school, and for sometime I forgot all that had happened elsewhere. No one was bothered to know anything about the trip and all of my colleagues and even others looked like sick people. Some among them talked between themselves that they doubted my having gone all the way to Jaipur and that I must have just been to Bangalore and returned. That was, of course, a joke.

The Secretary of the History Congress wrote to me on the 17th January 1952 that the President, "Rao Bahadur Sardesai expressed his interest in your paper on Coorg. He will be glad to receive a copy of that."

I sent him a copy immediately, and Dr. Sardesai acknowledged receipt of the same on the 31st January 1952. Thanking me for the same, he wrote that, "I think the whole history of Coorg is very interesting and deserved to be fully explored and rewritten ...". Such letters and messages of good-will afforded me sufficient strength to bring out my book which finally saw the light of the day in 1953. I sent a copy of that to Dr. Sardesai, and the old man wrote to me on the 10th August 1953, from his

home in Kamshet, Poona, as below :

" I am glad to get your letter (and also the book). I remember you very well. My only regret is I am not what I was two years ago ...I am now 89, although not bedridden ; I am afraid my working capacity is gone. So don't expect any opinion on your book for some time. I have every desire to go through your labour.....".

This old man was a doyen among the Indian historians of this century and a close collaborator of Sir Jadunath Sarkar of Bengal. He passed away sometime after he wrote the above letter. I was glad that I had the good fortune of being heard and blessed by such noble souls.

59. "A TINY MODEL STATE"—CAME OUT

By this time, I must admit, I became inactive, and I found the old lively days were no more before me. As far as Coorg was concerned, I had nothing to do there except my usual work in the school which gave me a boring effect although I used to teach only the top classes and the teachers' training classes. The S.S.L.C. Board had appointed me as an assistant examiner in Kannada, and that afforded me some interest mainly because of the money it paid.

I attended the Kannada Sahitya Parishat held at Belur in the summer of 1952, and there I met many old elderly friends, and among them were Masti Venkatesha Iyengar, and Padukone Ramanada Rao of the Training College. I enjoyed visiting the Belur and Halebid temples

and breathlessly wondered at the sculptural wealth and beauty and art of the ancient constructions.

I took up my book work and got along with it with myself typing day and night after purchasing a type-writer for the purpose. I typed and revised, and revised again and typed till I gave it a final shape. All my collected records were squeezed dry and were incorporated in 37 chapters. That became "the first book of the kind" in the sense that I tried to get the history of the district from the deep past and brought it down to the time of printing the manuscript. No significant facts were omitted and the work was comprehensive in the sense a detailed account of administration, culture, people etc. etc. were added on to that, and most of the information given as everybody expressed were known to the people for the first time, and in that way that became the one and the only book that happened to be encyclopaedic in character, and that was what most of the people said.

During the time of the preparation of the book, my main concern was that of money to get it printed, and therefore, with the draft copy, I continued to go round to some rich people. In January 1953, General Cariappa retired and came back home. I went to him with the draft copy, and he went through the same with great interest. In fact, I should say that he read it thoroughly. On my request, he took trouble to write to some people to contribute some money towards its printing cost, and then he left for Australia. Later I had to help myself. Some people donated Rs. 100 each and some others finished off by paying an amount between Rs. 10 and Rs. 50. Some of them considered that as a mark of great sacrifice on their

part and kept on blabbering about that with others openly. But I had to be very strong in expressing how I look at such things. To one gentleman I wrote on the 19th February 1953 telling him to shut his mouth or take back his money. "I am here to refund that amount with great pleasure," I wrote. I did not want any aid with strings attached and I did not care for those men with three or four cars or with 200 or 300 tons of coffee. I wanted some sincere and generous help and I knew what I was doing or writing.

With all this, I could not get at least one-fourth of the sum that I wanted. The most indecent things about people were yet to be seen here. Five or six rich men including some retired officials, promised me in writing that they would pay Rs. 100 each. But they didn't pay the money even after the book came out of the press. I possess the fascimile of all their writings but I don't feel like revealing their names because some of them have helped generously to some other causes, but the behaviour of two or three of them was unpardonable because they were always like that. Can't help.

But then I am happy to mention one name and that is of Gundukutti Manjunathayya who had never disappointed anyone who went to him. His charity has always been generous and spontaneous.

Among others to whom I had showed the draft copy with the idea of getting some useful suggestions towards its printing, was Iychettira Subbayya, who had become an Assistant Commissioner at that time. As he and I happen to be of the same family, the readers are apt to misunderstand me if I speak 'frankly'. I had known him

very well, and had begun to pity him for his ways and outlook long before the rest of the people had known him. Haradas Appacha Kavi in his letter of the 26 August 1942 had something to say about this man and it is not worth quoting here especially because both of them are now dead. Subbayya took the draft copy of my book and kept with him for a few days and then wrote to me on the 5th March 1952 stating that, "I have been trying hard to find time to go through your book but without success.....".

I don't like to comment on his observations. The book, "The Tiny Model State of South India", came out in August 1953, and about 500 copies were sold out in about three months' time. Most of the copies were sold by myself. Almost all the leading newspapers of India gave a very encouraging and long reviews, but all that would take much space of this book even if I try to give at least the extracts of those reviews. Most of them hailed the work as encyclopaedic in character, and some leading journals gave a glowing account of the work. I am here giving a few of the statements expressed by the leading Indian newspapers and journals :

- i) This is a welcome addition to the scanty literature on Coorg
- ii) This is the first book of the kind
- iii) It is encyclopaedic in its approach
- iv) A fulfilment a long felt need
- v) This is the first attempt by a son of the soil—to survey an all-absorbing and soul-entrancing story of the land of his birth
- vi) The author's passionate love for the State is visible in almost every page of the book
- vii) This authorship shows much patient and admirable research
- viii) It should prove to be a standard work on Coorg for

many years to come ix) It is written in a simple as well as charming English x) This author, I hope, will find a place among the historians of our country."

Some among the reviewers had something to say about the bulk of the volume ; some commented on the language and some on the printing mistakes. All these comments were accepted by me as real, but the appreciation I got in the newspapers through the reviews by the leading Indian historians baffled me and I felt that my efforts were indeed successful.

Among the personal letters of appreciation that I received, I may mention here that of C. Rajagopalachari, then Chief Minister of Madras, dated the 15th December 1953, the President of the Indian History Congress, dated the 10th August 1953. the Government Epigraphist of India, dated the 18th October 1954, the Director of the State Committee of the Freedom Movement, Bangalore, dated the 4th November 1953, and many others. Among those of Coorg who said that the book "should prove a standard work for many years to come" there are many prominent men whose letters I possess even now. One such letter of the 19th January 1954, said that

" That you should have brought to light a book of this magnitude and size speaks volumes for your great courage, tenacity, pertinacity, grit and untiring industry. Had it not been for the above characteristics every Dick and Tommy would have ventured this adventure. That there should be one I. M. Muthanna to accomplish this task and none else is a proof positive of the dearth of persons in Coorg to tread an

untrodden path. I have read your book with the attention it deserved and all credit and honour to your labours."

Another gentleman in his letter of the 15th December 1953, said that, "I have commenced reading your pile of knowledge. You are rightly predicted as one of the future historians of India". The letters like these and sentiments expressed therein sustained me and my efforts. The book, "A Tiny Model State of South India" was the result of my labour for fourteen long years. This book of 380 demy pages was printed in small fount and very closely too, and, if it had been in a slightly bigger fount, the bulk of the book would have easily gone up to 550 to 600 pages.

Anyway what was of great interest was a series of questions that were asked by the people about the book. They asked: (i) From where did you collect so much information? (ii) When did you write all this? (iii) How were you able to get all these facts that were not revealed hitherto? (iv) You being a Kannada teacher, how did you set out on this grandiose scheme of writing this monumental work in English? (v) How long did you take to get all these facts in the form of a book like this? (vi) From where did you dig out all those baffling revelations about the political as well as the departmental history of Coorg?

Well, well, in answer to all these questions, I would put up a face of an idiot and then pass on, because I knew that there was no use in my explaining to them on a subject in which they were not interested. However, 99 percent

of the readers appreciated my endeavours. The one percent of those who did not like that were the politicians of the time and they were so because of political reasons and not for any personal prejudices. That appeared to be like that in those days.

What is of great interest here is that when so many newspapers of India were pouring in the reviews of the book, and the readers' writing long letters congratulating me over that, those people connected to the Kodagu Weekly, including its directors some of whom were just boorish according to themselves, never knew that there was a book like that just on their table. That paper and none of the fellows related to that, had never had a word to say about the book. I was told that they were terribly sick. Those people were taking interest "in matters political" and that was their horse-trading business. Anyway those very bad losers played a very bad game throughout, and, of course, the result was that they ran amuck in frustration.

The All India History Congress met in 1953 in Voltaire, and I attended that, where I again took the opportunity of meeting and listening to the fellows in that field. I was there for three days and then returned.

60. BOOK, BOOK, BOOK, AND BOOK

The Education Officer recommended my claim for the graduates' cadre of salary twice in 1952, and wrote to the Government to consider that immediately. But being a Capricornian myself and always influenced by the Saturnian and Satanic evils, nothing would come to me as expec-

ted. Here again Kuttu of the Chief Commissioner's Office had something to do. Kuttu, who had nothing to do with me nor had I to do anything with him, was prejudiced by one Appu, a colleague and a street peddler. I noticed Kuttu's incompetence that was bordered on inefficiency as well as inaction in regard to this case as in the cases of others as well. At last on a fine day, I went to him and frankly told him that he was useless for the job that he was supposed to have been doing for thirty long years. Luckily the man retired from service after a couple of months and the situation in the Government itself changed soon after.

I have already told about the general elections of 1952, and about the merger party forming the Government in Coorg. During this time I was absolutely neutral as a good disciplined Government servant, but I was watching the fun from end to end. On the day the North Coorg election results were announced and when the merger party bagged all the seats but one, I happened to accidentally meet Kittur Mallappa in the street and congratulated him. His reaction was characteristic of his arrogance. He said, "We had already expected to get all the seats but somehow we missed one". That was the last occasion I saw him.

On the day of the inauguration of the new Government I watched those men of the victorious merger party of Coorg, who were all just a bunch of opportunists with no political opinion of their own, emerging into limelight, well clothed and capped with both certified and uncertified Khadi. The 'Sultan' Bedi continued as the Chief commissioner with his coloured turban and well-trimmed beard,

Excepting one or two, the rest of the victors, had their heads turned, and, that was perhaps natural, because in those days in India people from streets were suddenly lifted up through a window to the terrace with the help of burglars' ropes. But all such people were saying that God helped them and then started chewing the cud of their past prejudices. Many were booked from the day they assumed the charge of their position and authority. There were two ministers. The two ministers in the Coorg of the mid-twentieth century seemed very strange to the people. The two ministers after about 150 years' administration of the British in Coorg, seemed to be a bit odd and that was like the two Russians visiting India in 1956, and trying to scale and climb the cocoanut trees. Strange spectacles, indeed.

I have stated in brief all that had happened after that in a few pages of this book. Many things happened during those four years seven months and ten days. On the whole, it was like a Panchayat Government experimenting a sort of mock democracy. Well, I don't want to get into those details again.

My claim for the graduates' cadre of salary was still there to come. Therefore, I had to behave like a good man. I had told a couple of my friends and senior colleagues that I would quit the teaching post there the moment I got my salary grade. Those friends knew what I said and they also knew that I would do what I say, and they are there as I write this although one or two of them passed away later on.

In Nov. 1952, the Chief Secretary Narasimha Murthy accidentally laid his hand on my files. He wrote a long

note in my favour stating that my salary grade should be considered with retrospective effect. He simply studied the case and not the man whom he did not know. Over and above that, the Education Minister Mallappa wrote strongly supporting my case. The final orders to that effect was passed on the 19th March 1953, No. 4/7299/306, and that carried two advanced increments. That was the second time it happened so in my case; the first time I got the advanced increment was when I joined the service and the second time was just on the eve of my leaving the service. With that my mission in Coorg was over. After that I was only counting my days there.

Kuttu came to know of this, and he realised that his mischief had just failed. Some strangers in the Government, strangely but justly, considered the whole thing. The man passed away only about two months after that.

I continued to work in the school and I would not resign then because of the fact that my book which was already in the press stood in my way. I utilised all my salary towards its printing cost.

In the middle of the year 1953, the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India" came out of the press. I thought that I would take my own time to quit because it would be hard to sell copies after that. I had to stick on to my post for some time but all my plans were misfired.

When the book reached the hands of about 300 to 400 people, that certainly became an object for gossip at many quarters, and consequently the same gossip of the streets, restaurants and clubs reached the ears of the Government. As a result, among those who exhibited cynicism, jealousy, communal and political motives to-

wards the book, there are FOUR groups or categories of people, and I shall now deal with each one of them in a greater detail. The first group of the people were the sycophants. They went to their bosses and said in the course of their usual chanting of the words of flattery, as below :

“ Muthanna's book.....Useless all wrong.....
 Many mistakes ...Ignored the popular Government
No good photographsAll wrong.....Strong
 case for the anti-merger party.....The price of the
 book is very high.....Muthanna is making money
Too many mistakesToo much money... .. No
 good photographsAll wrong”

What is to be noted here is that every word of these phrases was a mark of high tribute to the book. None of those fellows who were talking in the above terms had read the book, let alone buying the copies. I know a good many of them but I must avoid mentioning their names for the sake of decency, and not out of grace for them.

The men in the top who heard so much about so small a man and his book, had also no better work to do. In the olden days such petty chiefs like country Paleygars, were keeping themselves busy by marrying repeatedly. Their great ancestors, after generating a terrorous reign, would collect women to their harem and that seemed to have been a good occupation for them when they did not know to do ~~better~~ anything better. In Coorg, however, to run a small Panchayat Government, there were too many men, and too many men with too little to do.

Those men heard all about my book. They heard

with their ears straight. They, of course, had known me. To add to that they did not find their photographs in the book. They thought that as I was in the Government, I was bound to cater to all their likes and dislikes. Those stupid fellows did not realise that the groups and parties may come and may go as the one in Coorg had come and gone, but the long standing records of this type would never go unless they are entirely burnt.

And all these people including 'Gupta' say that they are all advanced, and the world itself is 'running'. What running? The world is now running back to barbarism because man's moral progress has always been backward and not forward. Anyway, here I shall endeavour to give instances of what I saw in my own case although I know hundreds of such instances in the cases of others as well. When I point out some names of some persons here, I am doing that with any motives as such. The names that I mention here are welknown ones, and therefore, I am ~~not~~ not doing anything odd when I refer to those names. I have already said about Kotera Chinnappa's opportunistic way of life. When my book came out, he wrote to me on the 16th December 1953, that :

".. ...On the whole, it seems to me that(you have) made a strong case for the anti-merger party in Coorg. The names of the and..... do not come anywhere. These are notable omissions One must be impartial.....Anyway you have done well".

This was the same Chinnappa who wrote his pictorial biography in which he had moaned that the then merger party of which he too was an associate, had let down

Coorg and so on. This gentleman-sycophant, however, did not read my book before he sought to advise me on impartiality. The names of whom he wanted me to mention are already there in the book but the man never took the trouble to see that. There were many like him, who were calling on their chiefs with this kind of report. However, I wrote to him a strong letter on the 17th December 1953, telling him not to lose his balance in things like that.

When this man of the merger party told me to be 'impartial' and about making a 'strong case' for the anti-merger party, the members of the latter party, had their own things to say on the book. One of them, Apparanda Thimmayya, in his letter of the 13th December 1953, wrote to me as below :

"... There are too many names..... more or less a propaganda bulletin (of the Government)....brought up to date Should have confined to history and customs However, I congratulate you on your effort"

Here are two different opinions. Both these are tolerably enlightened men but both were politicians though not every active. One was a member of the old legislative council, and the other of the then legislative assembly. One appeared to have been of the merger party and the other represented the anti merger party. One found the book as "made strong case for the anti-merger party" and the other said that the work was "a propaganda bulletin" of the merger party. One said that there are no names of some people whom he liked and the other said that there were too many names. Now I would, therefore, say that

both these men were misfits as critics because they don't meet anywhere in their evaluation of the book. They were biased towards one view or the other. Can't help.

What should the author do now? He did not write the book to cater to the minds of these kinds of people. He wrote the book for his own satisfaction of fulfilling his long-cherished dream. That was his labour of love and not a labour of trade as people generally do. Anyway why did so many people take an unusual interest to blabber about the book day in and day out? The answer for this, as one of my friends said, was that:

"The book is good and it is truly an encyclopaedic work. Naturally such a work should attract the attention of the people. But when they talk about that they find it difficult to appreciate that. That was purely jealousy. Moreover the book is unexpectedly large in size and stuff, fully informative, and well brought out, and that pure unadulterated jealousy of the people ought to be more for a work like that because it was an effort of a person whom they didn't expect to indulge in such a thing "

I heard all that he said with great interest and finally told him that, " Well said; that's correct; I agree; Yes, I do understand; thank you."

61. THE OTHER THREE CATEGORIES OF PEOPLE

The *Second* category of men who wept at the sight of such a 'wrong book', and then passed on damaging comments on it were just those who suffered as my friend

said, from a thing called jealousy. Here I must be allowed to be frank. These jaundiced men had no political interests as such. They were as far away from the Government as I was, but their mischief was directed against the book and in turn against me. For this the people in the Government were not responsible though they enjoyed all that when informed, especially when informed by the Kodavas themselves. Although there were hundreds of men under this category, they did'nt count for much because their trouble of indigestion was their look out. Yet I may have to name one man here, and he was Iychettira Subbayya, and that he and I belonged to the same family made the matter all the more interesting. I have already quoted his letter of the 5th March 1952, and here I may quote one more sentence from that when he said returning the draft copy of the book that :

" I hope to find time next month if you are prepared to wait. I am however returning the draft as I do not wish to keep it with me. Yours affectionately".

I feel sad about this affectionate man. Moreover, his trouble was, that he had no time, and he wanted me to wait for him till he found time. I had known no waiting at all, and my book came out in print without its waiting for him. After that he sneakily took one of the three Government copies of the book and kept it in his house to munch the contents and thus derive some knowledge out of it, and that he and everybody else had to do because the facts contained in the book, served as a guide to many of them in the Government. Their government bulletins took a lot of material from my book and they did it un-

ashamedly and without acknowledging the same.

Among those in streets and cellars, there were a few doing some under-ground business against the book, and one of them was a kitchen boy of some politicians who was in a press. But I think that I need not take note of such fellows here.

Well, the third category of men who were prejudiced against the book were the communalists. I think, the book "A Tiny Model State of South India" had some revolutionary fervour, and that indeed rendered some sectional appeal to people in spite of what they talked about it. I shall here give a nice illustration. One local coffee planter of Suntikoppa, a Bunt by caste, wrote to me a long letter of three typed pages, dated the 17th December 1953, quoting from my book some lines about Bunts given at the page 207 of the book. His whole letter was just a cry in wilderness and full of irrelevancies. Among other things, he said that :

"I regret to bring to your notice a demeaning reference to Bunts in your book—A reader who does not know about Bunts is apt to conclude by reading it that the Bunts are a cooly class—You do not seem to have bothered while writing a book of importance to know anything about Bunts—"

This Bunt planter says to a writer of "a book of importance" about Coorg, to write about Bunts. Why should I write? While saying so, he says that Bunts are a great people. Maybe, I don't know. He says that I did not "seem to have been bothered to write about them". Why should I bother? Who are they for me? He says

of Bunt kings, Bunt ministers, Bunt banks, Bunt hotels, Bunt saloon etc. So what? In the end he says, "Pardon me" Why should I pardon him? He knows that he was doing a crime by being communal, and also by writing irrelevant things to an author of "a book of importance".

No, I would not pardon him. I should record that his conclusion are venomous. This Bunt planter's name is, Vishwanath Rai. I must assume that he passed on a copy of his neatly typed letter to his men in the then Government who must have read it with interest. This Mr, Rai had known me very well, and then all of a sudden he wrote this letter, and then he started hiding his head from me. Anyway I told him later and also sent him my views on what he wrote to ~~him~~^{me} through others verbally. Those 'others' were the other Bunts. I told something like this :

"Vishwanath Rai writes that he felt strongly" for belittling other communities while bestowing lavish praises" on my community (Kodavas) Tell him that this kind of stressing on 'communities' is rabid communalism. If Vishwanath Rai wants to praise Bunts, he must do it. It is his community and he is the proper person to do that and glorify his community as I did mine. I am not a commissioned writer (or a court writer like G., I mean, Gupta) to write on any community and thus tell lies as paid agents do. What am I to do with the Bunts? Who are they? They might be great people, but how am I concerned with them? It is Vishwanath Rai's business to write about his community. In Coorg, I hold that the Yeravas

and Kurubas are greater than any of these recent immigrants like the Bunts of South Kanara and the Marthas of Malabar.

"In Coorg there are about 4,000 Bunts and among them 3,800 work in fields and farms, as Vishwanath Rai says, like 'coolies'. They are a floating population. They come during the working season and then get back and then again come. My business in the book was just to say about those 3,800 'coolies' who come and then go. In democracy, it is their votes that count and not of a few planters and clerks. I am sure the district of South Kanara must be having some books on Bunts, and a reference to them in my book is just appropriate, and more than that, would have been irrelevant, as he says, "in a book of importance" about Coorg.

"Therefore, it is he, Vishwanath Rai, who should start writing about his Bunts, and he is the right person to write about them because he is a Bunt. But he must sell the copies of his book only for his few educated Bunts and in South Kanara. Suppose I go to South Kanara and settle like Vishwanath Rai who has come down to Coorg to settle, I would not dictate to a Bunt author to write about the Kodavas of Coorg just because a few Kodavas live there. That would be arrogance on my part, and I look upon Vishwanath Rai's views also as such. Incidentally I may also say to Vishwanath Rai that no Kodavas work anywhere as 'coolies' like his great Bunts working all over. Therefore, it is Vishwanath Rai's business to tell us all that. What am I to do with his Bunts and their

grievances?——”.

These are the things that I passed on to Vishwanath Rai, Planter, Suntikoppa, in reply to his letter dated the 17th December 1953. On the whole, the entire thing seems to be silly. Those non-Kodavas, after the general elections of 1952, got suddenly bloated and elated by the success of the merger party of Coorg who formed the Government. The immediate effect of that was that these kinds of uncalled for betrayals of arrogance of the Bunts, Badagas, Chandalas and others. They quickly forgot that they or their fathers were all the recent immigrants and a hundred such immigrant groups and communities numerically formed a majority over the ancient people of the land—the Kodavas, who, of course, according to adult franchise, had to inevitably lose their place.

But that need not be a reason for Vishwanath Rai and fellows like him to go off their heads and write things without knowing what they are doing. Incidentally I may also state that this Vishwanath Rai was for sometime a great Bhakta of the Thalekavari road; yes, of the road, and not either of the ‘Thale’ or of Kaveri. Vishwanath Rai wanted a road from Thalekaveri straight to South Kanara, and that short-cut would facilitate all his Bunt Bhaktas to undertake a pilgrimage to Coorg estates to work like ‘coolies’, as he says; (I did not call them as such). It was for that Vishwanath Rai too had become a temporary Bhakta of the Thalekaveri road about 25 years back, and that was his social service. He left out to say that among the Bunts there were great social workers also. I had forgotten about this Viswanath

Rai's letter and all about his social service all these years, and now I thank my unforgetful mind which afforded me an opportunity to include these things here in this book.

The other community that had something to say about the book, were the Brahmins. Only a few mediocres among them found something to say on that. At Page 294 of the book, I have given Lieut. Connor's statement that said. "This caste (Brahmins) is held in but low estimation by those mountaineers".

This is a statement of 150 years back, and also it is a historical truth. In 1788, the Kodavas drove out the Brahmin Nagappayya first and the Mysore Muslims next. Those brahmins, just about a dozen or so, were brought by the Lingayat Rajas into Coorg just to conduct services in the temples. But as years passed, their number increased, and most of them came from South Kanara. Biddanda Bopu's South Kanara expedition in 1799, was mainly aimed against the brahmins. The Kodavas also knew that the main spokesman to cause the Kanara insurrection of 1837 was Karnik Laxminarayana who was tried and arrested in Bangalore.

Hilton Brown stated the whole thing in a nut-shell that, "the Brahmin is unquestionably an outsider". This is true. Even today, every brahmin in Coorg has his one leg outside Coorg, excepting of course a few families who have been here for over 100 years. But why the Goorgs did not like them? I can't understand that when especially I have a good number of brahmin friends. But most of them worked against Kodavas but always with a smile on their lips. Such hypocrisy anyway would'nt last long.

The *Fourth* category of people who unwittingly got

the book caught in the whirlwind of the time, were the Kodavas themselves. The anti-merger party people among them were a set of damn idiots. Numerically they are very few, and, therefore, they lost their battle. In politics they were weak, in unity they crack, in cooperation they fall apart ; without achieving anything they brag, and, to hide their weakness they bluff. They have allowed others to rule over them in the past, and the same story continued even during the general elections of 1952. They have not known to unity at any time. They take delight in betraying one another. In the larger context that is the Indian way and the Indian history and tradition. This kind of thing exists in every caste and community of India, and that may be due to some weak points in the Hindu religion itself.

Apart from these four categories of people listed above, I should say that the most important of all the causes to create commotion, was the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India" itself, because of its bulk and voluminous details most of which were revealed for the first time. It is a production of fourteen long years of ceaseless and relentless effort. The appreciation and approbation poured over the book fed me all along, and I have no regrets.

The most dangerous critics of the book, although they did not do it intentionally, used to be at the streets, clubs, restaurants, buses and elsewhere. They simply gossiped Government agents, government contractors and government sycophants carried all that to their bosses. Those and those things aggravated to a filthy extent and created an annoying circumstance on either side, and as a result, my dream of quitting the place remained suspended because of the day that never came till the 15th December 1954.

62. WHAT'S THIS—BOOK OR HOOK?

From March 1952 to September 1953, a period of eighteen months, too many people were booked by the party that came to power, and those involved were some officials, planters, merchants and others of the opposite party. Repression, oppression and suppression of hundreds had taken place within a short time and those things were brought to light from time to time. The members of the anti-merger party in the Assembly and the local newspapers gave expression to all that in very strong terms. This was all that the people got after clamouring for 'responsible government' to a tiny area of the sort.

On a sunny day of September 1953, I got a lift in the car of one of the ministers. Where was he going, I didn't know, but I knew where I was going. It was a Sunday. The very next day evening there was a meeting in Mercara. It was a meeting to concert measures for intensive social service. That was a very impressive objective. It was a Government sponsored meeting and the whole town was informed of that. Out of about 14,000 people of the town everybody expected that there would be at least 1000 to 1500 people in the meeting, and elaborate arrangements were made for the same. They found the Town Hall very small for such a meeting, and therefore thought of holding that meeting in the open place like Rajs's Seat where about 10,000 people could be accommodated and also could do social work. Notices to all government servants were sent, and that they would always do, because in the event of the general public failing to attend such meetings, the Government could bank upon the compulsive co-operation of about a thousand government servants at least.

Anyway, finally when the notices were issued about the meeting, the venue of such an important meeting happened to be the Hindustani School which consisted of two or three small classrooms, and, of course, a few benches and desks. The lanes and gutters leading to that School were cleaned for the occasion so that the expected mammoth gathering would not cast aspersion over the efficiency of the municipality that consisted of members of the party of the 'popular government'.

The convener, and with him a social worker with a Gandhi cap, went there an hour before the meeting began in order to look to the arrangements and also to receive the distinguished guests and the elite of the town. For over three-fourth of an hour, not even a street dog showed itself alongside the lane. Now the time was up, and two distinguished members of the audience, one a municipal councillor with ^a kind of suit and another local merchant as well as government contractor, came and they were warmly received by the convenor. Soon a Communist went there. He got a cold reception in contrast to the one given to the two men earlier.

There were only two minutes left for the conference to begin, and the number of people gathered to that much publicised conference was only five including the convener and a social worker. It was then some teachers including myself went there and the total number of the audience suddenly rose up to fourteen. But then to reach at least the one-thousand mark, another 986 persons were required. But they could not wait for any more because the minister who had to preside over the meeting also came there and the total number of people shot up to fifteen, among

whom nine were teachers or government servants.

This was the popular Government's popular meeting conducted in the name of social service, and after so much of publicity all over, Expecting a huge gathering and abandoning even other bigger halls, they had decided to have an open air meeting with mikes fixed. Finally for reasons known to themselves, they gathered at the Hindustani School where only five men attended and, of course, nine teachers. I was wondering whether it was really a meeting or a secret party of a few anti-prohibitionists. Those nine teachers who were there were accidentally led by a headmaster who had no tongue to speak nor teeth to bite, and, that [however, saved the situation.

The meeting seemed to have been a promising one. After some time two men came. They were not sure of going to a meeting like that. As they were passing that way they saw two Government cars parked behind the main street along the gutters. They thought that some strange *Thamaasha* must be taking place inside that small building and in such a secluded place, and, therefore, they just peeped in. As the meeting that was called for, to discuss and concert measures for intensive social service in a state of about four lakhs of people, these two intruders were cordially welcomed. They were led to some honourable seats most of which were vacant. The convenor's oratory now rose to a high pitch because the total number of people shot up to seventeen.

As a silent observer of the popular government's popularity, I wondered and sat befuddled by all that I heard and had seen with my own eyes. As I sat listening to a

speech, my eyes wandered over that vast gathering of seventeen men. I saw those two merchants in deep meditation over the loss they sustained by wasting time at such a meeting, the communist was grinning after taking a full view of the whole *Thamaasha*, the government contractor was dozing, the municipal councillor with his Gandhi cap in his hand was scratching his head and the rest of us were simply sitting with our heads blank and almost with no heads even to scratch. My presence there was a blunder because I was the most inconvenient observer of that farce.

The subject was thrown open for discussion. The Communist gentleman discussed it thoroughly, and he did well. The rest of the public men sat silently because they did not know why they were there, and how they happened to be there. The nine government servants were expected to act as dolls and they did act well. When they were made to dance to their tune they did that also well. I too joined in the dance but as I was not accustomed to that political *Bangraa* dance, my foot slipped. Those people then ignored the Communist member in the meeting and hit upon me saying why I had slipped.

In fact what happened was that I didn't like their hypocritical speeches on social work and I criticised the Government and their social work business. That was naturally held as objectionable. That was true, but that was the only social service that emerged out of the meeting and that was all the social work of the Government that took place during the year. In fact, it was I who was responsible for that 'service.'

But the 'service' didn't end with that. It continued for some time. On the 8th October 1953, No. 4313 the

Government asked me why I should make some "adverse comments" at that meeting "held at the Central High School".

That letter was shabby in its contents. I could have ignored that letter but I would'nt for obvious reasons. Those who dared write so were liars. In my reply of the 12th October 1953, I mentioned mildly that the letter they had sent was a cooked up one. Later they corrected all those wordings on the basis of what I had written and again asked me, rather shamelessly, to explain about the "adverse comments". I wrote back again my 'comments' together with the names of all those who were present at the meeting, and for a couple of months nothing came out of it.

With this, they booked me alright, but to hook straight, they waited to cook up something, and that something was the book, 'A Tiny Model State of South India' which was already in circulation. They heard so many people talking about the book, and that certainly caused them some uneasiness and then thought of referring to my file after five months in February 1954. They thought that it was time to cook up to hook me with the book. They took out the list of the names given by me of those who attended the meeting held six months prior to that and picked up two names from that. Those two names happened to be that of two Brahmins. They were asked to write out all that I said six months before that at the meeting. That was wonderful. Those two fellows who were to be promoted only a couple of months later to the posts which they had never dreamt to get, whispered each other on what exactly they should write almost in an

identical way and as spoken by me. That distorted version supplied by them was sent to me, dated the 18th February 1954. In reply, I wrote that all that they wrote were wrong and distortious. But they, in a letter of the 12th March 1954, threatened me of action quoting the 20 (a) of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules. But I repeated the same thing in my letters, and with that the matter was laid to rest for some time.

63. "PERMISSION TO WRITE" TO WRITE WHAT?

Long back in March 1943 when the 'world' of Coorg was calm though ravaging wars were going on elsewhere, a little book of mine was in the press. Then I wanted to know if I should obtain permission from the Government "to write a book". I was told that for writing on history, culture, art, literature etc no permission was necessary even though one was a Government servant. They (the British Government) were right.

In about the month of July 1946, and after the world war ended and when Coorg was as usual calm, I asked the Government if permission was necessary to publish a manuscript of mine. In reply to that they said in a letter No. 1428/46 stating that "no permission is necessary" to get the book printed, but the author should not be a publisher. Again they (the British Government) were right.

In 1949 (after the independence of the country), then Government of Coorg asked about four or five of us, if we are interested in taking up the compilation of the Indian

National Register of Records and Historical Manuscripts concerning Coorg, in a letter No. 28820/49. I received two letters on this; one in my capacity as the President of the Literary Society and the other addressed to myself. I do not know what the others said in reply to this letter, but I offered myself to do the job. Later, on the 16th June 1949, No. 6170, the Assistant Commissioner in reply to my query, said that proposal "has been dropped for the present".

Alright. Nevertheless, I continued doing my own work in that respect. The draft copy of my book was ready by about 1950. I wrote to the Chief Commissioner whom I had not seen at all, asking him if he could give me a 'foreword' to my book in the event of its getting printed at a later stage.

That letter must have not been seen by him, but his office wrote to me, No. 14230/1951 that, ".....the question of writing a 'foreword' to the would be publication, by the Chief Commissioner can only be considered after the remaining portion of the book is submitted to this office."

That "remaining portion" was the last four chapters of the book concerning the culture of the people. It seemed to me that those clerks in the office would write a foreword and then get it signed by the Chief Commissioner. Therefore, I went to that office with the remaining portion of the book and saw what they were doing with the portion already submitted. After going round for some time there, I politely took back the manuscript from them and then calmly walked out.

On the 28th January 1953, Education Ministry, Government of India, sent a circular letter No. F. 32/52/

1953, to all the States, and that said as follows :

"It seems that there has been some misunderstanding and confusion by the provisions of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules which required that the writings of articles by Government servants should first be sent for scrutiny.....It will be readily conceded that the teachers who are in intimate touch with the people and who have the required ability to write are in the best position to produce material suited to the needs of the peopleSteps may be taken to remove misunderstanding among teachers."

And I was a teacher. The above circular was quite relevant and it seemed to me that it was specially sent to educate those liars and upstarts in the Government. Moreover charges brought against the Government servants for writing and producing literary and historical books, had been thrown out by many High Courts of India, describing such restrictions on educative and cultural books, imposed by the 'jungle law' of the prejudiced and ill-informed politicians, as "bad law" and as 'ultra vires' of the Indian Constitution, Article 19 (i).

When the Government of Coorg began to ask me at the end of the year 1953, if I had taken permission to write a book, I was quite aware of the fact that I was the two-hundredth man to have been asked an absurd question like that because quite a number of government servants and even the public men had already been victimised on various flimsy grounds. Therefore, I had reasons to think that those kinds of questions over writing a book was just a joke. The "jungle law" should prevail because man, as

he was then and as he is now, is after all a creature that emerged from jungle.

In January 1954, the Government asked me for a copy of the letter No. 1428/46. This was how the nuisance began. I gave them the reference number of the letter and said that I could not trace the copy of the above letter. In the meantime, they sent a circular dated the 5th March 1954, No. A. 28741, which said as below:

"It has been observed that some Government servants (it means that it was myself) are in the habit (yes, a very bad habit) of writing books (what books?).....and publishing them without obtaining the previous permission..... They have to obtain previous permission of the Government if they desire to undertake any work of literary and artistic nature...".

Yes, any work of literary and artistic nature. They sent this stupid circular all over Coorg, to the Government wood-cutters of Kutta, to the toddy drawers of Sampaje and to the illiterate weavers of Kodlipet. They sent circulars like this to terrorise people, and many people began to run away from me after that because those poor people thought that I had committed a great crime. Those 'run aways' included many people of the 'cities' of Mercara and Virajpet and also those fellows who started to write their own brand of books after the death of that Government in November 1956. To write a book of literary and artistic nature, to write a poem and to draw a picture and to paint a scenery, one has to ask the Government for permission. Damn the Government of the sort, wherever it might exist. I am aware that the Communist countries have circulars of the sort sent, but people

there live without souls and there exist only corporations of human beings without life. If these fellows here are leading the country that way, God bless the country.

The above circular, however, was contrary to all the letters sent to me by the previous governments. That circular showed that Coorg had the reign of illiterate Paleygars who ruled from the jungles. According to them to write poetry and history which are literary works, one has to obtain permission. That is called arrogant fascism from which barbaric system conscientious writers and artists are running away to the places where there is freedom and enlightenment.

After a circular like that, they replied to my letter on the 9th March 1954, No. 1657/54, stating that, "that order refers to the poems . and not a general order to print any book". Well what was extraordinary with this "any book" which was already published? However, they knew that they were on some mischief and I knew that I should hold on to keep them at a distance. My letter of the 12th March 1954, was as below :

"It was clear (from those letters) that "no permission was necessary", and I do not remember if it was meant only for writing poetry and not prose, or only in Kannada and not in English Apart from those letters, Fundamental Rules 69 also did not restrict us from doing these works. I am in receipt of the recent circular contradicting the F.R. ..".

There is no use of recollecting all those things now. But for the guidance of future writers and also of those vicious tyrants who might crop up from time to time,

I shall now reveal, and for the first time, on this point of "taking permission to write". This is I am doing, I should also say, for my own satisfaction as well, to make the record complete together with the hope that the progeny of the jungle gangsters would one day see the light of wisdom that has now blurred their eyes of vision as well as reason. Let me now recount and proceed :

FIRSTLY, in 1943 when I wanted to take permission, I was definitely told that it was not necessary. SECONDLY, in 1946, when I applied for permission, I was informed that "no permission is necessary". THIRDLY, in 1949, the Government itself asked me through two communiques if I could take up compilation of historical record of Coorg. FOURTHLY, in 1950, I had already made known to the Government about the compilation of my work. FIFTHLY, the Government of India circular of 1953 was clear when it said that literary works need not be sent for scrutiny. SIXTHLY, the Government servants' Conduct Rules 20 (i) was found ultra vires ... and bad in law according to the many High Courts including the Calcutta High Court in regard to a case of the 17th August 1954. SEVENTHLY, the Fundamental Rules 69, did not restrict Government servants from doing works of "literary and artistic nature". EIGHTHLY, the Fundamental Rights of the Indian constitution, Articles 19(i) guaranteed to every citizen the inviolable right to write something sensible.

What more can I say? Now the truth is that the donkeys, if not properly approached, would kick. Men have been endowed with the power of reasoning, but even those men, if refuse to understand things, would either be

donkeys or tyrants. That was why the members of the legislative assembly and the general public of the day expressed time and again on the floor of the House and elsewhere saying that those Government men of Coorg of 1952 to 1956, were tyrannical, their policies repressive and their administration just a mockery. They threw away to the winds all moral laws given by an alien government through the Fundamental Rules, and those given by the Indian Constitution through the provisions of the Fundamental Rights. The fuel to make their bungling administrative machinery moving was supplied to them by hundreds of prejudiced and jaundiced sycophants, political defectors, and many odd elements of streets and gutters, and they in the Government thought—all that was administration.

Now the truth is that those few individuals had never dreamt that they would come to power, and that was so in the case of many hundreds all over the country. However, now having had come to power by some crude ways, they ran amuck with this kind of repressive as well as treacherous measures, and they did not know how to rise above the human inadequacies. In order to perpetuate themselves in power they even allowed a large-scale emigration of outsiders with the grant of lands. All such vicious fore-thought was to defeat their powerful rivals with the help of those immigrant votes and thus wipe their rivals off the scene so that they could go on till eternity although their 'eternity' ended so soon in four years and seven months in November 1956.

Such men would not even tolerate newspapers of India publishing long reviews on the book, "A Tiny Model

State of South India". They saw in the book the ghosts of their political opponents. They could not face the realities with decency and without jealousy. They did not like people even appreciating the quality and contents of the book. For instance, the then Principal of Mercara College wrote that "Mr. Muthanna deserved our congratulations for writing a book like this which admirably fulfils a long-felt need". The fellows in the Government read that. They also read even greater and more impressive tributes that were poured on the book, "A Tiny Model State of South India". But those local Paleygars could not even touch a hair of those men. They could only arrogate their authority to question a local scholar and academician like a Principal of the College as to how and why he should write or give his impression on the book. This is proletarian dictatorship. That is how the socialists and communists demolish all moral laws and start destroying freedom and free thinking and suppress the intellectuals. And this Government in Coorg called itself a popular Government. What popularity it had excepting a pitiable existence of four years seven months and ten days? But people said that outside Coorg in other States, the conditions were much worse. Yes, it was and is much worse, and indeed, that is the country.

Anyway, I am here to say after about fifteen years, and after having had seen hundreds of unfortunate victims of those days as well as of these days, that we are still in an irreligious and unethical age, and we are still groping in the dark without knowing as to whither we go. That is in a way, in India, where 65 per cent of the people survive with death, disease, hunger, starvation, ignorance and

superstition, and they are led by leaders who have no nationalism nor nationalistic conscience. That's why it was said that the country would get the leadership it deserves. Yes, it deserves.

63. LOOK, THEY SAID, I WAS TRADING.

The 'popular' Government of Coorg and some other such small Governments in 1952, were an experimental creation of Government of India, as Part C States. This popular Government in Coorg came to power with the votes of the majority of the illiterate people most of whom were of the labour class and immigrant workers. Of course, that was the case all over India and it was in that way the Congress party had some bright days during the first fifteen years after the independence.

Once an Indian politician took a foreign visitor to a political meeting at a remote village. "Look", he said to his guest, "those are our people. Those thousands are a illiterate folk. Suppose they get educated tomorrow, I would not remain in power".

The foreign visitor stood flabbergasted at this honest revelation. That is our country. In Coorg too we had such a 'popular' Government.

When the leaders of such people become rulers so easily, they in turn think that teachers, farmers, tillers, heavers, and sawers are all traders. That was how they thought when they saw me producing a book. They are right if they had thought so because their own antecedents were enough to make one understand what they were.

In Coorg, the 'popular' Government formed a 'popular

Committee' to rewrite the district gazetteer, according to the Coorg Gazette of the 1st November 1954.

Who were the members of this Committee? All the three were the retired teachers. Perhaps they thought that teachers were usually trained for writing gazetteers; or they must have thought that if one teacher could produce a book, "A Tiny Model State of South India," of closely printed 370 pages, three teachers could produce at least four volumes of the kind of at least 4000 pages. That was their intelligence which the unintelligent people saw in them. However, these three members were no writers of any books, and it was doubtful if they had read any book after they had left the school about forty years prior to that. All the three, though two of them Kodavas, had no knowledge of anything of Coorg history. The one non-Kodava member was an outsider and he was packing his things to get back to his place in Mangalore, and the non-Kodava Secretary of the Committee was waiting to retire from service in a year or so and then get back to his place in Shimoga.

Among the two Kodavas, one was an active party man of the 'popular' Government, and the other, as said already, was getting old and behaved as though he had no tongue to speak nor teeth to bite.

Those learned members of the gazette committee forgot to produce any gazetteer or some kind of trash to show that they too did some thing. But the trouble with them was that they did not know why after all they were made a 'Committee', and what after all they should do. They, on the whole, produced nothing, not even an agenda of their Committee meeting. A couple of times

they sent the Secretary to me for some records. I treated him with hot coffee and bluffed cold lies about the records that he wanted. I also warned him not to make any effort at stealing the contents of my book. Of course, without doing that, it was really not possible for them to do anything else.

Then again the popular Government made some liberal grant to some of their flatterers to produce a small brochure called "Writers of Coorg." This great production was of 28 small pages, and it came out in December 1955. A list of 32 writers is given there, and among them about ten writers just wrote some newspaper articles and nothing more. They were not of Coorg. They lived there for sometime and then disappeared. Another ten or twelve men listed in the book as 'writers' came from somewhere and they never remained in Coorg even to die there, and their writings were also not of Coorg, and they did that when they were somewhere else. All those were just 'the birds of passage.' Maybe, about eight or ten people mentioned in that book could be called 'the writers' of Coorg. There was a comment on that book in the Kodagu Weekly of February 1956.

On the whole, such misleading records were very many, and such stunts were exactly the cause that produced a Dhanalaxmi over-night in Coorg for the consumption of their political booster.

The 'popular' Government's popular terror was kept alive all along that even those men of medical profession, those doctors of Coorg, had no nerve to say that the whole story of Dhanalaxmi was just a hoax. As a consequence of that terrorous repression that was let loose by

the political traders of the time, the secret of Dhanalaxmi became a national and international news. But that hoax did not last long. The medical men of outside Coorg promptly "exploded the Dhanalaxmi myth".

The terror of the days of Lingaraja of Coorg was nothing in spite of his bad treatment to some men of his time. But during the four years, seven months and ten days, from 1952 to 1956, the mini-Lingarajas nourished a terrorous reign that no man would speak to man, no one would visit his own relation, and no one cared to know anything of the other. Many people of different shapes and dimensions, and castes and creeds suddenly became strange bed-fellows. All affection and cordiality and greetings were based on the political relationship, and all this I saw with my own eyes and that was awfully disgusting, and pitiable too. People were avoiding people and they were just content with speaking inside the four walls of their bed rooms. By the time the things seemed to have been turning towards a situation where the relationship of husband and wife, father and son, neighbours and friends appeared to be getting strained for nothing at all or due to some odd political reasons, the States Reorganisation Commission of India, did a wonderful job of recommending the merger of this god forsaken State of 60 by 40 miles, the existence of which as a Part C State was just an anachronism. Anyway, the situation was thus saved. Let me also stress that all that I say here is no exaggeration.

I know hundreds of incidents when people ran away from people thinking that every other man was a spy. If I should state my own experience, once when I was in

Napoklu, an old man who was a retired government servant, ran away to his hide out when he saw me. That man might have read all the circulars that Government was sending asking the people not to write and not to do any bad things of the sort. This was one of the thousands of such things and the cumulative effect of this kind of behaviour of the people of that time was called a 'popular' Government of 1952 to 1956.

I don't know that if a Government worked that way would come under trade, although I am aware that there are many 'God-sent' traders even among the writers. What would that Government have called the books that were manufactured as 'wedding gifts' later on in Coorg? Well, let me proceed. They asked me on the 8th May 1954, No. 3426/54, that:

"Whether you wrote your book at the request of the printer or publisher or—for sale by yourself, and also state as to the number of copies released for sale, the average sales and the extent of average sale proceeds with details of net printing charges and the margin of profit, if any, per book. Please also state whether you received any money out of the sale proceeds, if so on what account you received the same ..".

This looks like a volley of shots aimed at a dacoit. Some people said that that might have been to assess income-tax on my 'book business'. The Government must have also had the fear of my becoming a millionaire out of the 'book trade' when those fellows were drawing a salary of only Rs. 600 or Rs. 800 a month. Apart from the above letter to me they also sent a sealed cover to my

printer to elicit information from him about the book which gave them such a heart-burn, headache, of course, what? What a mighty Government that was to get frightened of a book written by a teacher! They seemed like hunting after a shadow of a ghost. That kind of sealed covers they did in many other cases to hunt after income-tax evaders of the opposite party. A good number men worked in that section of the "Sealed cover department" and that was like a butcher's shop. The last letter that they wrote was on the 26th July 1954 in which they said, "you have written a book—further, have engaged in the trade".

"Engaged in the trade", and that was how those traders found the ghosts of 'traders' everywhere. Here I must stress that what they told me as 'trading' was the travesty of truth. Those jaundiced and ill-informed men were incapable of understanding the amount of labour and money and time that was involved to get up a work like that single-handed. The fellows who wrote to me that I was 'trading' were themselves the active traders, one a press and paper vendor, one a cardamom dealer and yet another a land auctioneer and so on, whereas, what I was doing, everyone knew. Those people were sorry that they could not use me or my book for their own publicity as they did in the case of Dhanalaxmi, Sangayya and others. In that way their vision did not go beyond their self-interests when especially they allowed their men to plunder and loot lakhs and lakhs of rupees not only from the periodical allotments of money they got on one plea or the other from the Centre, and also from the local co-operative societies, co-operative banks and co-operative

go-downs.

This is not the place for me to narrate at length all those kinds of trade carried on by those people. If I want to, I can begin the story from the newspaper, the Kodagu Weekly, and then end it with the description of the popularity *Tamaasha* of the popular government; but who will give me money to print if I write all about those things, and, of course, with the support of the relevant records? Would the Kodava Samaja give me a loan of Rs. 10,000 just as they gave plagiarizer to write books with colour pictures? No, they would'nt give me, because, firstly, I am not a small newspaper editor, and secondly, I would not be the right person to bluff as the author of the book 'Kodavas' did.

64. "A REWARD FOR AN INSIGNIFICANT WORK"

That letter of the 26th July 1954, was the last one to me. On that it was mentioned as 'confidential', but everyone knew the contents of the letter long before it reached me. I had to myself correct their charges as applicable to me because what they wrote was fantstically wrong. I began saying that :

"I think the said meeting was not held on the 18th September 1953, but on a Monday some days earlier than that. Though I take no serious note of that, I regret to state that in letters sent by the Government, different dates are put in different letters".

That was the fourth time I was bringing to the notice of those shameless impudent fellows such mistakes. I also said that they were just cooking up charges with the wordings changed almost every time. That was humbug which they baked at the bakery of the confidential section. Luckily a friend who was there used to inform me the degree of the steam generated at that bakery. I knew the cases of about a score of people against whom things were cooked up at that confidential section.

One might ask why this fake issue of the sort was not taken to the court directly. Yes, that was a fit case to carry thus far. But what 'court' and what 'law' was there excepting the jungle law? I have seen many times those petty judges and munsiffs of the local courts running to the ministers to ask them how their judgements should be in regard to some 'special' cases and what should be their verdicts on some particular cases. In fact, those were no courts of law at all in those days especially when it came to dealing with the cases concerning their political opponents. There were, of course, High Courts and Higher Courts, if one fancied to go to that extent but who would bother about all that. Therefore, in those days, things seemed like a huge joke with its tragic aspect of the situation as well. But how do the numerous district courts and panchayat courts in India function now? I don't know, but someone there must speak frankly and honestly about all that.

When the jobless people are voted to power, those people open butchers' shops like this. It was true, that in 1955, they opened many liquor shops all over Coorg in order to increase the revenue so that they could feast out

of it. All those Coorg timber and the central subsidies and the local taxation proceeds were not enough for them. They wanted liquor revenue also and with such characterless fellows what better one could expect? That was why those vendors in liquor in the streets presumed that every other man was also a trader like them. Those upstarts were so much elated that they didn't realise that their hits were always missing. Once a book-seller went with a copy of my book to sell it to a man who according to the newspapers had become bloated from head to foot after assuming power, and as to a report of the 6th December 1953, their conversation was as below :

"Who are you? Ans: "I am a Muslim boy".

Q. "Who gave you this book?" Ans: "A merchant in the bus-stand gave me" Leave the book here and go." Ans: "No Sir, I can't." "Tell him that you left a copy with me". Ans: "No Sir, you must pay its cost of Rs. 10/- and then take the book."

Now what to do? That man turned over the pages of the book, looked at all the pictures but not to find his, jeered at some of the photographs and then helplessly gave the book back to that 'Muslim boy' who had done his job well.

What those people wondered was why after all their photographs didn't find a place in the book, and indeed that was what many people were telling me. If not their photographs, at least names should have been there, according to that opportunist politician and time-server Kotera Chinnappa. But they must have known that if I had done the work as they wanted the value of that

would have been greatly reduced, and it would have hit upon my 'book trade'. Moreover, I didn't find them worth honouring that way and I knew them very well. Therefore, let me join many others to say that it was a good thing that Coorg was saved from the hands of those men in November 1956, whose politics of personal vendetta was just a curse to most of the people, excepting of course, to a few of their party.

That 'popular' Government was publishing a bulletin called "Coorg Information" both in English and Kannada, and it was printed in expensive art paper. Every page of that journal was filled with the photographs of those three or four men in different poses, sitting, standing, laughing, grinning, bending stretching (what?) etc. Of course, that is the custom all over India for the ministers to show themselves that way. In Coorg too they did it, but their bulletins contained a lot of material taken from my book. If I should quote all that here, I may have to pay heavily to the printer. One of their bulletins carried a long list of their nation-building projects that were already worked out according to them. An old man after referring to that list walked round his village in search of a culvert and a small irrigation canal that were said to have been already built there. After a hectic search, the old man asked me with that bulletin in his hand as to what it meant. What I told him, anyone could guess. I don't want to state that here because the old man is no more now.

Ninety-nine percent of the things that were circulated in those days of 1952 and 1956, were just that, absolutely false and fictitious ones, and those included their much manouevred charges against me as well as against many

others They would not sleep soundly without sending periodical circular letters to the Government servants, asking them not to write articles, books, or any such thing. Here is another circular, dated the 12th December 1954, sent just a month before I left the job, and that said that :

“ In continuation of this Government memorandum.....it is hereby directed that no Government servant should contribute articles to newspapers, magazines etc. or undertake to write books without previous permission.....”

That was a long sheet of paper to say this much. All these repeatedly sent circulars were sent all over Coorg everytime, and people thought that I wrote many books and those circulars were sent soon after the publication of each of those books.

Anyway, let me proceed. I wrote only one book and it was an outstanding work because that threatened those fellows who sent repeated circulars stating not to write any more of such books. The cost of the production of that book exceeded Rs. 4000 at that time in 1952-53. Nearly one-fourth of the money I got from the people a dozen or so and not more. Those who paid me some money very reluctantly received their money back because I did not like to make use of the money reluctantly contributed. About half-a-dozen people promised me in writing that they would pay Rs. 100 each but they didn't pay, and Kotera Chinnappa was one of them. Apart from the printing charges, I had to pay some thousands on collection of material and on field work which I did through the years both inside and outside Coorg. It was

not like translating or transcribing from other books just sitting within the cellars and without going anywhere to study things. I know people have done that. However, had I been a small newspaper editor, I would have had many 'generous souls' to help me with money. Had I been a party man of the party in power, that would have been altogether different. Had I been an opportunist, that would have been wonderful. Had I been one just making a 'literary career' bluffing and distorting things, that would have paid me well. But I was my own all the time. Every word in the book was my own, every name mentioned in the book, was my own discretion, every sentence in the book had my own impression, every mistake which the people saw even without reading the book, was my own, every picture was my own selection, and the title, "A Tiny Model State of South India," was also my own decision. But as a 'trader', according to the expert traders who ran that panchayat government, I was an idiot. I had more cheaters around me than helpers. and as a result, some hundreds of copies of the book had gone with those who just took them home, and most of such people were later on hiding from me. Many copies were given away for any amount that one could get. Well, that was that.

I wrote all this in my letters to the Government. Once a certain news-monger and street peddler asked me: "Who is helping you to put things straight, and in a way that you make it difficult for them to deal with you?"

That was a mischievous question, and I answered, "Your grand-father". He was silenced, but that man was a dangerous spy. How many more such spies were there in

the streets, God knows. In reply to their last letter of the 28th July 1954, I wrote and exposed their hollow charges and also cut across their false and perverse statements. But I did it mildly and that one must do because, as I already said, even the donkeys kick if not approached properly. In conclusion, I said that :

“ If any action is taken against me, I would consider that as a reward for my insignificant work ; and, also am proud to state that my book has caught the eyes of this Government in addition to the approbation it earned from all quarters as a remarkable work. ”

65 I SAW THAT AND HERE I RECORD THAT

“ Liberty is man's birthright. However, to give the reins of government to Congress at this juncture, is to handover the destiny of hungry millions into the hands of rascals, rogues and freebooters. Not a bottle of water or a loaf of bread shall escape taxation; only the air will be free, and the blood of these hungry millions will be on the head of Mr. Attlee. India will be lost in political squabbles . . . It will take a thousand years for them to enter the periphery of philosophy or politics. Today we handover the reins of Government to men of straw, of whom no trace will be found after a few years. ”

Thus spoke Sir Winston Churchill while opposing the Bill to grant independence to India, introduced by the Prime Minister Clement Attlee in the British House of Commons, in 1947. These are harsh words indeed, but the people of India would do well to ponder over them. When Churchill spoke of 'men of straw' and foretold that “ not

a loaf of bread shall escape taxation", did he have a premonition of the plight of Indian people, even a quarter century after they became free from British rule? No, it might not have been a premonition. Churchill and every Britisher who had been in India, knew the country and the people very well, and they also knew the quality of the Indian leadership. They had written plenty of it long back.

Here I am giving only a specimen of what those 'men' did. I have already said in pages 53 to 120 of this book about the situation of Coorg during 1952 to 1956, and that I said as a rebuttal to some spiteful observations and deliberate lies of the so-called writers who would go to any length to condemn Truth in order to serve their own purposes and mean existence.

On the day new legislative assembly which lived a shortest ever life of four and a half years, was inaugurated by the then Union Home Minister, Dr. K. N. Katju, on the 25th March 1952, most of the non-Kodava people who had never had access to the assembly hall till then, had gathered there. They naturally felt that they had a new lease of life. In the evening there was a show of Kodava dance etc at the fort premises, and as it concluded, Dr. Katju walked towards the Kodava dancers admiring their costume, *Vodi Kathi*, *Peechey Kathi* etc. One could then see some people who included a couple of Kodavas trying to guide their guest towards the other way in order to see that he did not reach those dancers. But Dr Katju moved away from their coteries and came to the dancers, conversed with them and looked at every piece of the ornaments they were wearing. One should study the story of this

Samsthaana government from its very inception although I would now just skip over the things here.

Most of those people in Coorg were moving about from then on with fear and without even trusting the one with whom the one was walking. There were only nine spies in that blessed Ramarajya but everyone felt that every other man was a spy. What a miracle in a *Samsthaana*! Some writers like Gupta and Guggu could by their writings fool some people for some time but not all people for all time. Anyway, let me give some facts that I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears.

Within a year, the so-called responsible government came into office, those in authority indulged in corruption, nepotism, victimization of their ancient enemies, repression of their political opponents, suppression of all moral and ethical principles and so on and so forth, and, in fact, there was no administration as such but just a craze to gather money by any means, and thus satisfy their ego and lust for power. (Vide-The Kodagu-12-2-1954.)

The Sangayya and Dhanalaxmi stories have already been told in the pages behind. Similarly two merchants of Kushalnagar were given crop competition awards. Those merchants obviously knew nothing about agriculture. Their land remained fallow for over 25 years. A neighbour of theirs had reaped a record crop but he had to go unnoticed because he happened to have been of the opposite party. (The Kodagu 19-3-1954.)

Those who were voted to power by a large number of ignorant folks and a few pathetically looking opportunists, were naturally power crazy, and that was not exclusively to Coorg. A matriculate minister simply played politics

and a Punjabi chief commissioner spent his time like an ancient Nawab in hunting and other kinds of wild pastimes, (The Kodagu 14-4-1954 & The Prapancha, June & July 1954.) Those in authority were constantly kept bloated by the increased dosage of flattery by their stooges and professional sycophants who said that the budget of the State was very good, made good, looks good and so on and they found their ministers working day and night (and, may be, throughout the night without light)—The Kodagu 19-3-1954. [those within brackets are mine !]

One can quote many such things from the ancient writings of the *Samsthaana* of 1952-56. Anyway, when it came to the year 1955, their game of bragging and bluffing was intensified because with the publication of the report of the States Reorganisation Commission, they realised that Coorg would not remain as it was and that they had to make all efforts to fill up their pockets and also magnify their so called achievements, which, of course, were nil. The press boys were going round for the news and The Hindu of Madras and the P.T.I., seemed to have taken a contract to print every word that the ministers bluffed. These reporters who were stationed in Coorg could have seen for themselves that those ministers were doing a false propaganda about their so called work. They could have verified all that was told, beginning from the Dhanalaxmi episode and ending with the Dhana-Swahami crusade.

Their press-conferences were spectacularly impressive, and from time to time they kept on bragging, that: (i) Forest conservancy schemes are introduced (and old forests will

be replaced by the new,) (ii) Hard-board factory will be established, (iii) Paper factory will soon come into being, (iv) A Rs. 85 lakh Agricultural scheme is envisaged, (v) A Rs. 21 lakh Horticulture scheme would soon be introduced, (vi) An aerodrome near Kushalnagar is contemplated, (vii) Coccoanut, arecanut, cashewnut and cardamom cultivation is encouraged and fertilisers ordered, (viii) Veterinary, Medical, Health and Electricity schemes are being pushed into operation, (ix) Tellichery-Virarajpet-Mysore-Mangalore railway line project would be taken up, (x) Sericulture and bee keeping and other cottage industries are being set up, and so on and so forth. These were all stomach full of Ramarajya dosages for the people to gulp, and then of course vomit it out-right, and for The Hindu, the Indian Express and such papers to fill up their starving columns. One more year in power the mighty Government of Coorg *Samsthaana* would have even envisaged a scheme to go to the Moon, and, in fact, some people were talking about that but The Hindu and the Indian Express and the P.T.I. forgot to pick up that news too.

This responsible Government irresponsibly spent a lot of money on their much advertised Barapole project. They were also talking about many other electricity projects in the name of every stream that flowed down the Coorg hills. These Barapole, Hemavati, Harangi, Kumara-dhara, Laxmanathirtha etc. were all catchy slogans of the day. While bluffing all about those rivers and their valleys and the ravines to the press-boys, they would bring in the names of some ministers of the Union Government some of whom had visited Coorg. That was how these 'tiny

tots' of States would get so much of money from the Centre after a display of mutual flatteries and after lunching and munching together, of course, at the State cost. But a report of an unofficial visitor to Coorg in August 1953, was interesting. Writing to the Government of India, he said that :

" During my stay in Coorg for five days, I happened to meet many people.....It appeared to me that the atmosphere was surcharged with suspicion and fear..... and the merger party which is in power now wants to crush the anti-merger group by keeping a close watch over their activities and harrassing themEven the Government officers are being picked up and victimised . This gulf in the local Congress has given scope for the Communists to infiltrate into Coorg from Malabar and TravancoreI feel that no time should be lost in mending matters here .. ".

But who is to mend matters? Where? And how? The Central Government had a lot to mend their own matters of their internal and extra-territorial squabbles which are still there. Therefore, who is to mend what matters, they didn't know. So the Union Government sent the above letter back to the local Government of Coorg *Samsthaana* asking these people here to mend matters among themselves. But, alas, they did not mend any matters nor did they mend their own pencils. What actually happened was that the local caucus of Coorg *Samsthaana* became all the more venomous after seeing that letter and then started hunting after the people who gave such reports to the outsiders. That was the

way how they would 'mend matters'. Indeed, that was all their four-year long administration.

In August 1955, two Malayalees wrote a series of articles in English in the 'Janma Bhoomi' Weekly, which of course died after five years. Those Malayalees wanted Coorg to remain separate so that it would be easy for them to take that into Kerala without fighting with a larger State like Karnataka, in the event of Coorg merging into that. "People of Coorg", they said like Jefferson and Lincoln, "should be the architects of their own destiny". How and from where did these two Malayalees suddenly emerge into the columns of the paper of the ruling clique, no one knew. That was the time when the amalgamationists of Coorg had suddenly become the separatists and got all such extraneous elements into Coorg to support them. Those Malayalees did not forget to say that a few of Malabar had once demanded the merger of Coorg into Kerala. They also reminded the Coorgs about 'the numerical strength' of the Malayalees in Coorg, and for which strength, the opportunist ruling clique was itself responsible. As I had already said in the pages behind, the fellows wanted to win another election with the help of these outsiders as they did in 1952, and thus wipe out their local opponents completely. That's indeed the story of Jayachand and Prithviraj. History, no doubt, repeats.

In the end of 1955, when the members of the legislative assembly met to discuss the resolution on merging Coorg into Karnataka, Apparanda Thimmayya, a staunch separatist, seconded the resolution and argued in favour of merger. What he then said made a lot of sense. He

said that this bad, corrupt, rotten and repressive administration of Coorg of 1952 to 1956 made him an amalgamationist. Earlier a system like this is ended the better, he said. Another separatist, Kakamada Ganapathy, said that it was better Coorg was merged instead of their living inside a small well of party prejudices, corruption, nepotism, and personal vendettas. He said that he was tired of seeing the turn-coat politics of the former amalgamationists (who have now become separationists). Merger of Coorg alone should end this local dog-fight, he muttered.

Kolera Karumbayya, another ardent separatist, did not support the resolution, and he squarely blamed Nehru who had gone back from his word, for the entire mess. In a politely worded speech he branded the Coorg administration of four years as corrupt, oppressive and not trustworthy. He was not for claiming any special privileges for Coorg—the would be district of Karnataka. Lastly Pattada Uthayya too stood neutral and expressed his disapproval at “begging for special privileges”. He was not in favour of craving for more seats at the State or the Central legislatures, but made some sensible suggestions like preserving Coorg forests, wild life and so on. The mover of the resolution, the chief minister, finally replied, and his reply was the most unconvincing one I had ever read. He merely played upon words and that indeed was his only talent to get on with his brand of politics.

However, excepting Kakamada Ganapathy, Kolera Karumbayya and Pattada Uthayya, who stood neutral, all the rest voted for the merger of Coorg, and this sort of resolution and its voting were all stage-managed and even forced upon the local caucus by the Central Congress

fellows who must have threatened them with the whip of party discipline.

The speeches made at the budget session of March 1956, were proof positive to show that those in power misused public funds in the name of administration. The Agricultural income tax alone in 1951-52 was Rs. 3,90,315 and in 1956 it was Rs. 76,10,825. Here one could see how things went on with all that money and with the money they got from other sources. Those people blew their own trumpets about their 'black-wash' business to the roads with tar, but the members of the assembly said that those few things would have been done if anyone and if any party had been in power. Considering the amount of money they had gathered from different sources, the work turned out was very little, the members asserted. In many cases, the budget figures were themselves wrong and even the proceedings of the legislative assembly were found tampered and altered as they liked. What can anyone do if people of this sort are voted to power anywhere? Luckily, they did not burn and destroy the records which told their awful story like those men of Madras, who did so as soon as they found that they had hopelessly lost after the general elections of 1967.

Cases of corruption and nepotism by the ministers and others were brought to light by themselves, perhaps, by mistake. Once a minister revealed that the chief commissioner who was branded as notoriously corrupt and autocratic, both by the members of the assembly and in the press, took 3000 cubic foot of timber from Coorg forests, many valuable drugs from the Coorg hospitals and many costly things from the Coorg poultries and

farms, of course, without paying anything. A minister strongly defended his partyman who was a director of the cooperative bank for taking a loan in the name of his wife and for which purpose they tampered with the Bank bye-laws. Of course, Nehru too did such things many times but in a bigger area and in a bigger scale, and he was rightly called "a defence minister of corrupt ministers". Therefore, things went on everywhere on the same model. There were in Coorg bridge contractors without themselves being engineers, poultry experts without having seen a chicken and agricultural crop competition winners and experts without having had any land or experience in cultivation and recipients of flood damages and takkavi loans without having seen a flood or owning a piece of land.

The frequent tampering with the cooperative rules resulted in swindling and misappropriating lakhs and lakhs of rupees from several cooperative societies. Bandicoots crawled all over the paddy godowns everywhere. I have already said about the Virarajpet Town Bank Co-operative Bank at Page 120 of this book. The day when the Bank Manager committed suicide there should have been Rs. 2,30,100 in the Bank, but on checking there was only Rs. 55,760, and that was Rs. 1,72,350 less. A defector M.L.A. alone took money from the Bank thirty-nine times during a period of three months, taking each time more than Rs. 1000, and he took it as though taking it from his own box. So did the others as well. No one cared to check the accounts when the directors themselves looted the Bank and that was the fate of the many smaller Banks and co-operative societies.

There were also reports in newspapers that a man in a co-operative society had defalcated a rupee and some paisas. The Government of Coorg *Samsthaana* in its benevolent quest of fostering justice and restoring *Dharma* in the land, was quick to punish the offender charging him of misappropriation. What is the secret of this kind of *Dharma*? The secret was that poor man, it seems, had belonged to the opposite political party. But according to the *Dharma* of those crude thinkers of the mid-twentieth century, all profits and misappropriations and loot should go to their own men, and, indeed, that was exactly what had happened when so many co-operative societies were looted and many thousands of rupees from each of them were shared by the "share-holders". If that was not 'democracy' of 1952-56 in Coorg, nay of India, what else? It is worth-while remembering Winston Churchill's words here ones again.

Well, that apart, a good number of complaints of thefts of logs of timber, misuse public of funds etc. were brought to light, and the Government were shielding the guilty everytime and then insinuating the opposition. All this was done in what is called 'the Nehru tradition'. Black-marketting and evading the income-tax were the badges of Congress men all over. They trained their party men in the legislature to be the professional sycophants who said that their leaders had achieved miracles like 'Alladin's lamp'. One man said that like the mythical Balarama who went round the world one should go round Coorg to see all those miracles. Another man said that "Coorg honey. Coorg oranges

"What? Oranges were also made by the ministers?",

interjected the Speaker amidst laughter. What else could he do? His lot was to sit and listen to all that his men were speaking, both nonsense and very little of sense. The misdeeds of the Government were catalogued and then they called them their achievements—all in the same tune like a gramophone song, but in different words, said one Member of the Assembly.

There was an army of gazetted officers, and many of those posts were gazetted just for political reasons, and that was what it looked like. That was altogether a national *Thamaasha*. Just before one's death one would usually show a sign of recovery from one's illness, and, similarly the responsible Government of Coorg swelled and then collapsed to the weight of its own top-heavy structure. (Refer to S R.C. Report.) The list of those gazetted is too long, but nevertheless, it is interesting to note such a display of huge joke that was perpetrated by a set of upstarts in the name of administration. The men who led the procession were designated as below :

1. Chief Commissioner
2. Chief Minister
3. Minister
4. Speaker of the Assembly
5. Deputy Speaker
6. Chief Secretary
7. Finance Secretary
8. Secretary—General Administration
9. Assistant Commissioner & District Magistrate
10. Executive Assistant to the Assistant Commissioner
11. District & Sessions Judge
12. Additional District & Sessions Judge

13. Munsiff Magistrate, Mercara
14. Munsiff Magistrate, Virarajpet
15. District Superintendent of Police
16. Deputy Superintendent of Police
17. District Medical Officer
18. Superintendent of Mercara Hospital
19. Superintendent of Virarajpet Hospital
20. Malaria & Health Officer
21. Chief Veterinary Officer
22. Provincial Tuberculosis Officer
23. District Education Officer
24. Principal, Mercara College
25. Professor of Botany, Mercara College
26. Conservator of Forests
27. Registrar of Co-operative Societies
28. Treasury Officer
29. Government Electricity Inspector
30. Community Project Executive Officer
31. Agriculture Officer
32. Agriculture Extension Officer
33. Agriculture Income-tax Officer
34. Minor Irrigation, Superintending Engineer
35. Minor Irrigation Executive Engineer
36. Executive Engineer (Central)
37. Assistant Engineer („)
38. Assistant Engineer („)
39. Assistant Engineer („)
40. Assistant Engineer („)
41. Horticulturist & Orange Research Officer
42. Agent, State Bank of India, Mercara Branch
43. Central Excise Officer

44. Central Excise Superintendent
45. Commanding Officer, N.C.C.
46. Employment Officer
47. Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha
48. Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha.

This is a long list of 'progress'. This huge establishment with several lorry loads of clerical staff dumped at every room, hall, corridor, verandah, attic, basement and at every available place of all the buildings within the Mercara fort, was more than enough to cause a quick death of a system that showed the symptom of early collapse. The last thirteen officers in the above list including the two members of the Parliament, had belonged to the central service, and thus, central or provincial, 48 men with ever so many jeeps and cars running about gave the picture of a genuine Ramarajya from out of which Rama himself would have run away asking Ravana to look after his Rajya. To add to those 48, there were men in the streets and in the office corridors, loitering about to get into things in which they were not concerned. All these men, contractors, drummers, stooges, hirelings, coteries sycophants and others including the officers listed above, were heavily paid and they derived, as it should be, other payments, both directly and indirectly.

66 A MOCK DEMOCRACY—ENACTED

That was what the situation from 1952 to 1956 in Coorg which was managed by half-a-dozen gazetted officers in the past till 1952, with perfect discipline, sound economy and utmost efficiency. After that in a situation

that was horribly deceptive and hopelessly repulsive, a man like me, a poor teacher, felt as though squeezed dry within two years. Therefore, the foremost thing that was in my mind was to run away at the earliest opportunity, and, indeed, that opportunity did come sooner than expected.

It was only then I began to think that the whole of India of Nehru's time was also in such a mess. Just empty words and promises, craze for power and for money, waste of public money, corruption, heavy taxation, foreign aids and such thousand sins were covered by a few show pieces of industrial projects, and the politicians bragged that the country was progressing and had achieved great things.

During the British time no one had heard from any quarter about foreign aid, foreign money, foreign food, frequent foreign travels, unnecessary and uncalled for tall talk about unconcerned countries like that of Russia or even America. No one had heard about borrowing money from other countries and food from friendly countries when the British did all those things that they achieved in this country only with the Indian money and fed the 400 millions of the undivided India with Indian food despite occasional famines and natural disasters.

Anyway the people who thought that Swarajya would bring them plenty of food from heavens saw only misery with the brown bureaucrats replacing the white. However, with their caps in tact, which covered all their fraud they practised day and night, things continued to be so all along during these years. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan during his visit to India after 22 years since 1947, said that, "Sky-scrapers may have come up in Delhi and other cities, but

the rural scene remained unchanged with abject poverty and distress staring men, women and children." (26th Nov. 1969) He also said many other things at many places during his tour all over India. In the same breath, writing on the eve of the 13th Rajyotsava of Mysore State, it was said that Coorg's performance immediately preceding its merger was also disappointing. "Coorg-a tiny-district State whose immense economic potential as a haven of coffee estates was out of all proportion with the poor show it actually put up in terms of achievement" (The Statesman, November 20, 1969.)

So these are the testimonies that our politicians earned by their performances and no one should think that I am telling anything new. I am only putting the old story on a new paper. Things are welknown, despite some hypocritical and spiteful writers deceiving the people by their false narratives. I have known many of the sort in India, and, in Coorg, I can conveniently point out my finger at Gupta and Guggu who have been misleading the people that way.

Let me proceed. As a distant observer of things, I have seen the grim and horrid picture of the national crisis of character and discipline, and that has been a recurring feature. As I had already said that apart from the well accumulated surplus funds of the Coorg revenue of the times of the Chief Commissioners, and apart from the open exploitation of the Coorg forests and an impressive amount from the agricultural income-tax and the periodical Central subsidies, a dozen of those local Paleyagars lured away those fear stricken wealthy people to contribute money for some construction projects.

A sum of over Rs. eight lakhs was stated to have been raised from the people often scaring them of dire consequences if failed to contribute. This money did not include that which was spent on school and hospital buildings got up by some planters, but the Government included these contributions also in the list of their achievements. These planters in order to derive some relief from the income-tax, got up such structures and then invited the local bosses to inaugurate them, and, together with that they stuck up stone slabs on the walls of those buildings with the names of all of them inscribed on them.

When I talk about this money with so much emphasis, I am well aware of the fact that they have misused and misappropriated a good lot of money, and that was literally a day-light robbery. Some people and organizations had donated liberally for various causes and I should say that nowhere in India people had responded to the call of the Government in this manner although it was in a way a forced contribution, and that was so because the Government was both repressive and oppressive. People paid out of fear. The list of those donors published in the bulletins show, with a few odd exceptions, that none of those were charity-minded, because they had not contributed any money for anything either before 1952, or after 1956, after the death of the Kodagu *Samsthaana*. More than 150 people and firms paid heavily from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 30,000 and the total collections soared high to the clouds and nobody saw that falling down to the earth. The Kodavas were the most willing victims because they had no other go. Yes, all these donations were motivated by political considerations and that indeed was fear, just

fear of Government of a *Samsthaana*.

In kannada they called this tiny State of 60 by 40 miles, Kodagu *Samsthaana*. All collapsing kingdoms and empires and even the ancient city states fell because they indulged in prostitution, and I saw one such *Samsthaana* falling or being forced out of its existence because of its misrule. Thanks to the trenchant remarks of the States Reorganization Commission of 1955. But the joke is that disgrace and humiliation and even the death of the *Samsthaana*, are characterised by the cynics like Gupta and Guggu and their coteries, let alone the politicians of the time, as progress

Democratic governments are built on the basis of parties, and the parties are fed by money and such money is gathered by corrupt and deceitful methods, and they call it politics. The outcome such of a system with no moral and ethical concept or element, is confusion and disorder and ultimately liquidation. And in a small place like Kodagu *Samsthaana*, money was wasted like flood water and they had storms and floods to get relief funds as well. A good slice of money was wasted on frequent trips to Delhi and other cities by top men, of course, on State or the *Samsthaana* business. They would always fly and ask their clerks to follow them by train or by bullock carts. A Government of a *Samsthaana*, you see.

Of course, there were also many fake projects. If such a huge amount was gathered by politely threatening the rich in a small district like Coorg, what the hell did they do with the national wealth, land revenue, income-tax revenue, forest money, central subsidies etc. Apart from the direct payment of salaries and the indirect pay-

ment to all the above listed officers and their clerks who had little work to do, much money was poured into the Barapole jungle and other ill-conceived prestige and paper schemes which came into being only on the time serving newspapers.

Many have said that they have improved the *Samsthaana* by asphaltting and tarring the roads which were already there. Not a single new track was opened nor did they take any trouble to straighten any of the narrow dangerous curves which were there inevitably when those hill tracks were opened in the last century. Not a single planter or farmer would agree to part even an inch of land at least to allow the road margins nor would they allow to remove a single plant in order to straighten the roads. But all the roads were 'black-washed' with tar, alright. The Bethri bridge was the only solid work, and they built a couple of other bridges and culverts also, and all this together, I presume, did not exceed Rs. 20 or 25 lakhs. But the people took things as wonderful when they first saw all that without directing their thoughts on the money the ruling party collected, wasted, pocketed or spent.

However, any kind of Government anywhere should survive only with the support of henchmen, hirelings, opportunists, stooges and such other beings. Kotera Chinnappa about whom I wrote behind was one like Gupta and Guggu, who saw much in that regime of 1952-56, and said that he "was more or less visiting all the centres of work with the ministers". Why was he following them? Maybe, to get his Balamuri bridge also built by them, and that was no doubt an excellent idea to go to "all the centres of work" which were there and which should

always be there. What he makes his fools understand is that there had been no centres of work at all in Coorg before he began to follow his ministers. He also played the role of a sycophant by flattering them all day and all night. Why people were like this ?

Chinnappa's impressive false statement is at Page 38 of his book. After trying to take the editor of the Kodagu Weekly into confidence by writing something about him, he said that he was glad that as a director now, he "got a chance of serving The Kodagu Weekly which was", he says, his creation. This is not true. To put it straight, he was only an agent appointed to enlist subscribers in those days and that helped him to do his flourishing insurance business, and, in fact, that was what he did.

Instances are very many in Coorg too to show that people who have been going about in rags and with poverty quickly became rich soon after they attained political importance, and one such man, an M.L.A., was able to buy a farm worth Rs. 80,000 within a very short time. (The Kodagu 14-12-1956), and, of course, many of them looted the co-operative societies and co-operative banks. That was the way how "the paupers became princes all over India" after 1947, and that was certainly 'a progress', the Ramarajya, they got out of Swarajya.

Those in the Panchayat Government of Coorg of 1952-56, used to have cabinet meetings and those meetings of three or four men would take places in their chambers, porticos or even bed-rooms. Having thus found a venue, what then to discuss ? The agenda used to cover some trifles. Much of their minds leapt over their political enemies, and if those enemies were civil servants then they

would talk about their contacts, their movements, their assets, their belongings, dwellings, lodgings, housings and so on. The Government of a *Samsthaana* of the 1950s that succeeded to the once Haleri *Samsthaana* of the 1750s; had so much to worry about all and sundry. Once an official banged the door right unto their faces and stormed out of the cabinet bedroom shouting and wondering at the wonders of the *Samsthaana* Government.

Evidently they didn't know the theory that "the least administered was the best administered". Unnecessarily they used to take interest in petty things, and tried to peep into all sorts of minor affairs and insignificant official matters. What else they could do after all? "Could they go to sleep after directing the policy matters?", murmured one Paleygar at the assembly. When on tour they would crane their necks for garlands enroute their hallowed routes, sometimes accompanied by the ministers from outside. They would expect people to line on two sides of the roads. If no one was there at least to do a *Namaste* with folded hands, if not with garlands, they would ask the concerned fear-stricken stooges even in writing why their route was having a deserted look.

When public meetings were held at the Town Hall or the College Hall, they would occupy prominent seats on the dais, But they used to keep even the distinguished guests or visitors aside to show the people that those guests were all nothing before their mighty presence. These kinds of things were no doubt some itching eczema of inferiority complex. In all backward countries one could see such symptoms and it was India that led such countries. Once an innocent

Government servant in a remote village and who did not know any of those fellows in power, was transferred to a far off place just for the reason that he failed to bow or greet one of them somewhere on the way. The most funny thing was that a haughty man with a badge of a minister went to an educational institution in July 1954 and returned angrily without addressing the students, for which purpose he went there. Reason :- The students did not greet him on the way and they jeered and scoffed at him. So he got angry. His uneducated colleague slyly supported his behaviour. These people were thus the show pieces of the time, and it is not for nothing that the younger generation are out on revolting against the kind of medieval barbarism of these days. Those Paleygars of the 1950s of Coorg venomously hunted after their long time enemies taking the God-given opportunity as an occasion for them to seek revenge. They went on prying and probing into things through their henchmen or spies and very often endeavouring to draw forth the old skeletons from the cupboard. They instigated the officials to unjustly book the innocent and honest employees with false charges against them and tried to implicate the silent and upright people whom they considered as their opponents, of some sort of misdeeds.

However, when the responsible Government of Coorg died as an irresponsible Government on the 31st October 1956, the people began to say not to beat a corpse although it was stinking as a result of its grave malpractices and maladministration. With so much of money and resources, not a single and much bragged projects like a match factory, paper factory, an air strip or any such thing was

set up. Some new constructions at Kushalnagar, Gonikoppa and other towns have now come up during these fifteen years, but the funds spent on them had no relation whatsoever to the funds they collected in Coorg from 1952 to 1956. What then happened to all that booty? The popular belief is that it was wasted in the form of grants, contracts, licences, loans, lands, promotions, increments, travels, battas, bribes, Barapole and other jungle clearance works of no consequence, etc. etc., and that was the reason why they had built up a net work of espionage. Thieves are always afraid of their own shadows.

Nonetheless, in Coorg "the beating of the corpse" of the dead Government went on for some time even after October 1956, because such things somehow go on. Ministers and some officers of the forced out Government were accused of grave irregularities, nepotism, fraud and deceit. (The Kodagu and the Prapancha Weeklies of the year 1956). A minister was quoted as saying just before the death of his ministry that his "power can't be taken away even by the President of India. (The Kodagu Weekly dated the 16-XI-1956)". It was like that a man called Nehru saying a few days before his death that he was "disgustingly healthy". Poor mortals! Arrogant folks always forget that they are sheer mud worms who ought to go to mud to become mud.

A man who flattered a minister stating that, 'you are a king, you are a saviour, you are a Lord.....' etc, was able to get fifty acres of land, and whether he paid anything for that or not, was a different matter. Recorded cases are very many to state that responsible people of the party in power snatched, grabbed or encroached the govern-

ment lands. A minister and an M.L.A. together promised to donate money to a school building. In anticipation of getting the promised amount, the people got the names of the so-called donors and inscribed in a stone slab. But the promised amount didn't come. The villagers thereupon broke that stone into pieces and threw those pieces out of their sight. (The Kodagu-16-XI-1956).

I think that it is a misnomer to call these fellows ministers. It would be appropriate to designate them as secretaries as in Western countries. However, one minister of Coorg of those times was openly accused of telling lies and cheating the public. This was true also. Even in the letters that they used to pass on to me there used to be many blatant lies, and I would politely correct them and tell them to be truthful at least in writing. They would correct that but in another letter there would be another bunch of lies. What could anyone do except wishing them to go to hell? However, one of the ministers was charged for not answering the public on his fraudulent land deal by means of threat and false representation. A writ to that effect was also filed in the High Court against him. (The Kodagu-20-XI-1956 & 7-12-1956).

A responsible M. L. A., was accused of obtaining Government money to erect a public building in his own name but the building in whosever name never came up. He was also charged with encroaching Government lands and with illegally obtaining the Paisari lands (The Kodagu 7-12-1956). The other minister had actively and intentionally engineered such misrule and maladministration and all such things could take place only after they had sanctioned each other's needs and frauds jointly and

firmly. Indeed, that was their procedure, their administration and the constitution of their four-year old Samsthāana. Anyway such organised and calculated misdeeds committed in the name of the poor gullible people and in the name of democracy, wherever it may be, is of course a collective tyranny.

However, the people of Coorg continued to 'kick the corpse' till some others told them not to kick the dead (The Kodagu-Nov. & Dec. 1956) that collapsed under the weight of its own miserable survival for four years, seven months and ten days. Speaking at the gutter corner of Mercara town, Gowlikeri, in 1953, a minister bragged that all what they did would one day be recorded. He was right, but he did not know that it was I who will be recording. When the ill-educated upstarts are suddenly kicked up they seldom know what they are doing, or talking.

That's how India's democracy worked all these years. There is much to be said that every politician beginning from Jawaharlal Nehru downwards who took upon themselves to arrogate civil and ethical values, and then continued to thrive on such illegal and indecent measures, treated all that as political morality. Not that there were no good and decent men, and in fact, there are many, but they would never fit into a system which the politicians had built in a fraudulent manner. They openly and unashamedly indulged in corrupt practices with no conscience whatsoever and then defended their partymen who did the same. Even after twenty-five years, the people cast their votes to symbols and not to men, and they had to vote that way because symbols are more meaning-

ful than men who have no character. One Congressman, after doing everything to violate the moral codes of politics wrote to a Congress-woman on the 19th November 1969, when they seriously accused each other after causing a split in the Organization that had sheltered all their corrupt, dishonest and opportunistic elements for a quarter century, stating that.

'The history of the 20th century is replete with instances of tragedy that overtakes democracy when a leader who has risen to power on the crest of a popular wave or with the support of a democratic organization becomes a victim of political Narcissism and is egged on by a coterie of unscrupulous sycophants who use corruption and terror to silence opposition and attempt to make public opinion an echo of authority.....'.

The 'mid-night letters' that were passed among themselves in the latter half of the year 1969, showed clearly the rot that is set into the body politic of the country. So when the top itself is corrupt both in thoughts and deeds, and morally a wreck, what to say about the bottom—the common people?

However, now I don't want to lengthen the story of that dubious and fraudulent period of four years of Coorg history. Much can be said about that but it would be too much to whip a dead beast, as people had already said.

But then I swear that I said all this just as a chronicler of the past events. I know that those beneficiaries and the stooges of the then party in power would seek my blood and my contemporaries would curse for exposing the deceit so unsparingly. People always try to get away

with fraud and then they pray to all sorts of gods to save them from their sins, which, of course, is another fraud of our people. That's why they created so many gods behind whom the unscrupulous rascals and sinners could hide. Be it so, but posterity should know that their elders were only that and they were no angels nor even 'men' in the true sense of the term.

68. AND, AT LAST I 'RAN AWAY'.

Yes, cynics-just a couple of them; told after I had resigned the job that I ran away. Maybe, they didn't see me going by bus.

Let me now continue my own story that I had left at the previous chapter. I said that I wrote my last letter to the Government of the people characterised as above, and all that I wrote was put in a mild official language, and, they very well knew where I was dragging them instead of they dragging me. A friend in the confidential section of the Secretariat told me once that even many of those rich planters and merchants who were victimised by the Government, were not able to rebut in the way I did in such a smooth and quiet language. That was right, and I knew that. I told him that those rich men were there only to die with their money but I have to die, I said with some principles. What else to say?

After I wrote that for the last time, I told the gentleman in the confidential section that I need a reply to that within the end of the month - August 1954. After two weeks or so he whispered to me somewhere on the roadside stating that my papers were set aside and shelved and

that there was no hope of dealing with it at all.

The month of August passed and my 'book trade' also had ceased. The copies of the book had gone to the hands of all the reading public by that time. I was no longer interested to stay on there. Things appeared to me as very stale. I started to brood over the timing to execute my projected plan of resigning because it was over-due.

I had also stopped mixing up with the people and thus I kept myself aloof from the street gossips and also from the news-mongers like Appu, Ayyu, Kuppu, Kalu, Guggu, and others. All these people had their own worries on account of the 'popular government' but they would naturally get relieved by talking about others, and at that time, it was about me they were gossiping. But my ears were safe and free from hearing what others said because I used to disappear from the town at four in the afternoon only to be seen there in the morning at ten at the school.

There were hundreds of government servants who were the victims of the repressive regime of the day, and it would be good if they come out with their stories so that we can know how much advanced the generation of our time in the mid-twentieth century. However, those numerous victims were helpless. But what were the income tax-evading rich men doing? Some of them, why, many of them, straightened themselves by falling in line with the official thinking. Out of the only nine members of the opposite party in the legislative assembly, one merchant member, defected and joined the Government party, and one or two others were thinking why they should not follow suit. After all what they or anyone would want

was money and to 'make money' people generally like to defect to the party in power. Rich men in order to curry favour of the ruling party, built small structures here and there for public use and had the names of the chief commissioner and the ministers inscribed in stone and then stuck them on the walls. That made their position secure. Some stone slabs in the buildings got up entirely out of Government money, consist of names of wrong persons who were not the least responsible for them. These stones like the one in Mercara college and the one at the hospital building built by a private individual and later acquired by the Government in order to snub the gentleman who built it, because he was of the opposite party, deserve to be pulled out from there. Many such things are misleading and those publicity stunts are mass deception and entirely out-dated, and those numerous stones are only of a nuisance value than anything else. In August 1965, I wrote an article stating that the British were in Coorg for well over 140 years but there are hardly half-a-dozen stones to commemorate any name of those people as empire builders, but one must look at these petty paleygars who got their names inscribed and placed all over during a short period of four years, seven months and ten days as though they built them with their own money. They might say that such things are done everywhere in India. That's true also.

These kinds of things are an outcome of a tyrannical regime wherever such things exist. Firstly they terrorise people and then obtain the latter's compulsive obeisance and submission. It is the richer folk who quickly submit to opportunism and they do it in their own interest. In

Coorg I saw such men who obliged by the circumstances of the time, contributed money for some Government projects, and, they if they had sons and daughters who got wedded during that time, brought those Government fellows for the wedding with special requests to them to show themselves up. That was taken as a mark of honour for the host who took special trouble to get them, and, those men, one with a Sikh turban and the other with a Kodava turban and yet another with no turban, would all show up with their handful of courtiers at such weddings and other functions.

That was also the time between 1952 and 1956, when a good number of men from outside were facilitated to immigrate. They were given land and the richer among them were aided to buy properties and settlements in Coorg. They were the reliable voters for the Government party of the day but unfortunately there were no more such elections because Coorg itself was gone as a State. More lands were sold to the outsiders at those constituencies from where the members of the opposite party hailed. In that, Ammathi-nad to which the leader of the anti-merger party belonged, was the worst casualty. If the ministers had a very ambitious eye on the next elections and yet another election and so on and thus try to come up to power again and again, they would as ministers do 'only anti-national things. Exactly that these people also did in Coorg at that time. In fact, that is what is done by those who had no nationalism at heart but only selfishness. In a big country like India, people cannot understand such things happening almost daily and they would know only a few of them on occasions

like foreign invasions like that of China in 1962. In contrast to that in small places like Coorg all sorts of vicious dealings would be known and they were known very clearly, and democracy in such small units worked like 'demon-crazy'. That was too small a place to have a government with all the costly paraphernalia like legislatures, secretariats a huge crowd of employees, an arrogant cabinet, their expensive coteries and so on. There was no loud and frank talk anywhere during those four years in Coorg and the government servants ran helter-skelter for safety. On the whole the system itself was "more a joke than anything else". That mock democracy did not work out even as a mockery. From end to end it was an anachronism. What else was it ?

Well, let me proceed with my story. I waited for a reply for my letter which only brought a general circular letter after about five months in november 1954 (already quoted). I have also said that during this long interval of four or five months, I was informed rather informally that my file was shelved.

In October 1954, I applied for leave stating that I would like to go 'for some studies'. That was a handy excuse for me. That's how I began to pack.

Between resignation and long indefinite leave, I chose the latter as best. My applying for leave was also motivated by the desire to get out from there in course of time as my mind was not made up to work in that sea of suspicion and ill-will. I had lost interest there, as I had already said, even from two or three years prior to that time. The political independence granted to a people who worked out things in a dubious way had sickened me and

that sickness aggravated with the circumstances of the times that followed.

After all what was there, and that was what I thought. There was nothing but betrayals from every side. The book about which I said so much was only a minor contributory factor. Those in the Government read it in the night time and used it for their political consumption in the day time. They showed it to the President and others of the Karnataka Provincial Congress as though it was a criminal code which consisted of things to dismiss them from their office. To many of them it was also a book of a great reference value and they quoted from that to the members of the States Reorganization Commission of Government of India. When the members of the Madras university Commission visited Coorg in 1954, the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Laxmanaswami Mudaliar said that he had already seen the book even before he came to Coorg. That was true, and such things really frightened some people.

Among the two ministers, who generated more venom I could not say, because I saw both of them alike despite their trying to put the blame on each other on many things. There used to be a race between them, it was said, for the one to become more popular than the other. One would not desert the other in public functions, both would appear together in public, both would attend the weddings or dinners or suppers, together and both would try to be a minute or two late at parties etc to keep the people waiting for them, and, of course, both would have their name on the stones. Very small place, you see !

In this connection, I am reminded of a meeting at

the town hall when the States Reorganization Commission members and the Madras University Commission members together took part. As the guests were getting into the fully packed hall, Mr. Panikkar, that shrewd politician, historian and member of the S. R. C., was humorously but meaningfully commenting to his colleagues as they were walking towards the dais, stating that, "Oh, a big function ! Ye, the chief commissioner Mr. X will preside over the meeting, chief minister Mr. Y, will speak and the minister Mr. Z, will distribute trophies". "Trophies" ? Trophies to whom ? Anyway, this shrewd Malayalee, had already come prepared to axe this mockery of the Coorg Government from its very roots. When some Malayalees approached him with some suggestions, Panikkar's reply to those who pleaded for separation was : "Do you want your chief commissioner to go about the fort on a howdah, sitting high on the *Ambaari* of an elephant ?"

Yes, he was correct. That's what some people had wanted. Once in November 1954, there was a Kannada literary function with some people from outside Coorg taking part in it, and that was held in the assembly hall. I got one Ramaachar trained to sing at that meeting a Kodava song that was composed by me. I did not tell him that it was mine because I knew that even an outsider like Ramaachar would not have sung that had he known that it was mine. The fellow mastered the tune and recited that at the assembly announcing that it was an ancient Coorg song. The audience that included the twin-ministers felt over-joyed when an out-sider gave the recital of the Coorg song and I sat far behind in the hall enjoying the

whole fun, when they like the stud bulls of the village festivals, listening and nodding their heads and talking or commenting about the song with great interest. If anyone had announced that it was myself the author of the song, a great joke would have been lost and the song would have proved tasteless. I told this later to Masti Venkatesha Iyengar who was also present at the meeting, and he and others who were with him too laughed and said that that was an inescapable joke.

Here I may indulge in some frivolity. I had some amusing experiences of people talking to me about me. Once I was going by bus somewhere in Coorg. A man sitting beside me asked where I was going, and my family name. As I answered, he at once asked :

“Do you know Muthanna?”

“Which Muthanna”, I asked.

“Vidwan Muthanna”, he said.

“Yes I know”.

“Is he in Mercara or where?”

“Of course, in Mercara. Why?”

“I have heard about him many times in connection with”

Yes, in connection with my way of speaking and reciting poems. That was in 1946. Once in 1950, the same thing happened with another man who was in a cloth shop of a certain town. I was there waiting for a bus. He introduced himself to me, and, I finished myself saying just my family name. The man then asked :

“Oh, then you know Muthanna?”

“Which Muthanna” ? I had to ask him again.

“The one who is in Mercara as a teacher”.

"Certainly, I know him very well," I said.

"I heard that he has gone to study for Law."

"Yes, he has gone. I too heard about that."

"Some people were talking about him"

Damn those 'some people', I thought and, as I wanted to ask him something more, the bus came and I ran to the bus. Anyway, I enjoyed the fun within myself and treasured such experiences. Again, it was in 1953. My book in English on Coorg was in circulation. Once a few of us were chatting somewhere in a street, and one in the group did not know me personally. Then it was about my book-they talked :

"It is a good book" said one to me.

"But it is too costly", another man said.

"I agree with that", I said.

"The price is well-deserved. It possesses a good lot of baffling revelations", the third man said.

"That's a fact. On some points, I have to talk to Muthanna-the author, and, I am sure, he alone could give a satisfactory explanation for my doubts which I could not get from ^{my} ~~page~~ one", said the man who didn't know me.

"That's true. Muthanna can tell yo all that", I said.

When I said so, the others laughed, rather loudly. My friend who didn't know me made out quickly that I was the author about whom he talked, and the fellow felt shy and then left the group saying that he had some urgent work.

These are just a few side-lights out of many that I had gone through in many other ways. But during those

days, when the people especially the Kodavas, talked about my book, they just whispered because they knew that I was mischievously questioned by the authorities, as already said, as to why and how and what for I wrote a book, the like of which they had not at all seen in all their lives. That, of course, showed their fear complex, and secondly, as people told me, their jealousy. However the cause for all forms of oppressions, is fear, and in that way, those timid fellows who came to power by crude means and methods were afraid of me, but then they transformed the rest of the people into a hoard of cowards. Some people were so much afraid of the regime of the time, they began to hide the copies of my book which they had purchased. Such Kodavas are not too many but they were very powerful opportunists, renegades and rascals. Some of them were rich men and they were wooing the Government people for some kind of cheap favours to carry on their mean livelihood.

One headmaster, a Kodava, who was on the verge of retirement, bought a copy of my book from someone. Perhaps, that was forced on him. He never cared to see even the pictures in the book, let alone his reading that, that man too had no courage to keep the book at home. He thought it was some pornographic or some kind of Communist literature. He sneakily carried the book to the school well-wrapped in some old pieces of paper, and sold it himself to his school library. But he would have no courage to display the book in the library. He took the money after selling it and quietly slipped the copy somewhere inside the bundles of old rotten books which were in some corners of his office so that he could have a

watch over that and see that no one dared look at the junk.

I think a race of this kind about which I try to glorify so much in writing, deserves to be wiped out, but yet one should wish that such a thing should not happen. Here again I should say these degraded and down-graded races and tribes of the jungles need still more refinement in addition to what the British had done during the last 150 years by bringing them to limelight. One can be cursing Churchill for calling these people "men of straw," but then he was right.

Now, ^{again} coming to my 'story', that I left somewhere behind, I should say that I was waiting for a reply to my application for leave, and I got one on the 15th October 1954, No. 540, stating that my leave could be considered only after the S.S.L.C. selection examination was over. That was the first of their evasive and mischievous answer. I thought that it might be a reasonable excuse, and, therefore, I kept quiet. Then, after a month or so, I applied again to allow me to go on leave soon after the selection examination was over, as they had said in their previous letter. I received the reply for that on the 16th November 1954, No. 612, stating that my "request ... cannot be granted". Why? What happened? No reasons were given. They wrote simply—"cannot be granted". Impudence, insolence arrogance and every such blessed thing was there in those three words.

People might say that this is bossism. Of course, that is correct. When the mediocres rise up as upstarts they tend to betray their bossism, but I may add that this uncalled for arrogance to me for nothing at all and months

after my previous papers were shelved and forgotten, showed that they were indulging in such malicious things only. That's therefore was not bossism. It is sheer barbarism borne out of pathetic and crude type of inferiority complex. Of course, I have explained what I meant when I say this,—in the pages behind.

However, that refusal to grant leave was the immediate and provocative cause for me to give them a quarter sheet, literally a quarter sheet, and thus carry out my long thought out programme and walk out. Readers must here say who provoked whom and how? On the 15th December 1954, five months after I wrote the last letter concerning their cooked-up charges and long after the affair came to an end, I took a foolscap sheet of paper, but, after a second thought, I felt that there was no need to waste that long sheet of paper, and, therefore, pulled out a quarter sheet from the table and scribbled three or four lines stating that I was tendering my resignation with effect from that day afternoon as I "intend to go for some studies". I gave that to the hands of an official spy in the school, although he was not designated as such, and disappeared. It is nearly eighteen years now that I left that school in Mercara where I spent twelve precious youthful years as a teacher, and that was the most happiest, momentous and busiest part of my worthless life.

PART VII

SAMAJA

69. "MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING"

After that, I mean after my resignation, what others said was not my concern. I disappeared from the scene. But then those people who did not like the Government of the day made my resignation a topic for them to talk. A few friends who had known that I would have resigned two years prior to that told me that they never expected that I would do exactly as I had said. And to all those inquisitive inquirers I would not tell my mental confessions and all about what I was feeling at that time. Some how even those who did not know me took interest in talking about me and they included all those street peddlars, gossip mongers and trouble shooters. They would not allow me to get over my resignation, and, therefore, I preferred to go into hybernation.

Moreover, the people of the *Samsthaana* who had by that time became mere robots looked at me as a strange being from a different planet to walk away like that. The atmosphere of those days was so poisonous, and people would not speak openly on anything, and some of them found me as an outcaste soon after I left the job. Many people read my book stealthily and some even hid the book and their heads together so that no spies could see them. That was certainly a dangerously debunking situation that had existed then.

In the conditions that prevail in our country, civil

service means just toiling like a slave and run about as errand boys. More the people in service show themselves as such more the bossism and arrogance of those in the higher levels. People used to ask me who exactly did the mischief in my case. I would say that I did the mischief myself by my not being a sheep of the shepherds. As already said that when they rejected my leave application that was the last straw, and that was the only thing they could do and nothing else.

Some people believe that the then chief secretary, Iychettira Subbayya, was the 'evil genius' here, but I would say, that was only their presumption because they had known our old and a not-too-happy relationship. But that man had no courage to deal with me. Although he was a rabid party-man even as a government servant, in this case he kept himself aloof by merely passing on the papers that side and this side, but whatever he was asked to do he did with a venomous interest. Poor man !

Was it then the Education Minister Mallappa who got things done ? No ; he was responsible only to the extent of turning down my leave letter and that he did because by that time he was prejudiced against me by some people, and they included Kotera Chinnappa. This man, Chinnappa, had nothing to do with me but he used to simply go to them with some selfish interest to get his own things done, and all such people talked about my book and not about me because till then none of them had seen such "a wonderful book." Yes, that was a fact also. Otherwise Mallappa was one of my welwishers and he had written good things about me.

What then was the role of Cheppudira Poonacha ?

Not less than half-a-dozen people told me that it was he who was the cause for the entire mischief, not only in my case but even in the case of some hundreds. That ought to have been so because Poonacha never knew to do anything good for anyone. Even if he had done something good accidentally to a few of his partymen and henchmen, all that was in his own selfish and political interests. In my case, my friends told me that he was very jealous as well as frightened of me. That was no doubt, obvious. Therefore, Poonacha's administration was merely directing his spies and hirelings to be sneaking about here and there. In that way he was a modern Kunta Basava of Coorg. A good lot of honest and earnest workers were troubled. I am not telling anything new here and I say what everyone had already said, including those newspaper reports. Otherwise, I didn't know this much. Uncalled for transfers, undeserved promotions to his men, unnecessary postings and superannuations, unethical dealings etc were the hallmarks of his administration, and that was exactly what Kunta Basava also of 150 years back, did.

Those hundreds of letters that were passed on to trouble innocent and law-abiding people and industrialists just because they were not of his party, were all his creation. Those letters were flown, some from confidential darkroom corner, some from income tax sector, some from "permit & licence" quarter, some from law & order 'coroner' and many through an army of spies, though officially there were only nine spies. Being intellectually ill-equipped, and only a matriculate, Poonacha had many imaginary opponents as well to deal with. All that was sheer out of

fear. In Mysore too he sought to do the same thing, even a village patel told me, and when he was thrown out of the Cabinet together with the entire Cabinet within 18 months in 1958, those Mysoreans had some more things to say about him.

But it didn't end there. Indian political situation of the time was congenial for politicians like Poonacha to rise up and he rose up to the Centre as a partyman. In that way, he was Nijalingappa's man. When Nijalingappa rose Poonacha rose and when Nijalingappa fell Poonacha fell. Even there he earned the testimonial as said at Page 124 of this book. They said that he would do well as a village social worker. But they didn't know that he did not have even that experience except of just being a member of Coorg Co-operative Bank to begin with.

But Poonacha was a politician. He always wanted some sort of political jobs and had never meant to do any sort of national service. Even after his enforced resignation in 1969 after two years in the central Cabinet, Poonacha sneakily came out of office arranging for another job and not to work for the country or at least for the party to which he was supposed to show his loyalty. He always stood in the background waiting to grab any opportunity while his leaders in the Organization Congress were busy organizing the party. Poonacha was not anywhere there. He had a job to do which he had already bagged and his coffee estate to look after. This is a pity on the whole.

However, as long as clique worked, there need not be any moral or ethical decency in our politicians especially when mediocres seek to rise up by dubious methods, and that might afford them as much pleasure as one would get

from illicit sexual intercourse. What for then they go about always in the dead of night ?

For all that I said in the pages behind, it was Poonacha who was personally responsible, apart from his legal, constitutional and moral responsibility. That happens with the people who suffer from extreme ambition and greed and selfishness, and the same thing was the aim of Kunta Basava who was a colleague of Cheppudira Ponnappa of the Raja's time. (Pages 231-232.) But Kunta Basava had the decency to commit suicide and save himself from being tried by the Government for all his sins, but the modern 'Basavas' simply grin as though things are quite alright with them.

However, in my case, as people told me later on, Poonacha was jealous as well as frightened of me, because apart from my book and myself, he had seen me in action on the platform a couple of times. But for the one with poor educational background and yet fighting for some kind of power and position, needs hirelings of his same calibre and not of any better stuff. His friends were all non-Kodavas, and he was sneakily avoiding the company of Kodavas. The slanderous and humiliating comments made to his face by the non-Kodavas against the Kodavas did not move him as a die-hard politician because he had already sold his conscience to them for their support to him. He was once a petty sub-Editor of the Kodagu Weekly, and he betrayed the one who had put him there and then sought the friendship of the wellknown corrupt and dishonest politicians of outside Coorg some of whom were blacklisted by the High Courts and by the opposition parties in the State assemblies for various kinds of political

and administrative fraud.

No doubt, Poonacha could hardly be expected to do anything better; Approaching people for votes every now and then made his moves and gestures artificial and his grins purposeless and colourless. He pretended to have been intelligent in his public utterances but in fact those were just cynical expressions which once his own chief commissioner remarked in a speech in 1954 at a meeting held at the Mercara market premises.

Therefore, if these are the people to rise up to the top to become ministers even at the Centre, Poonacha is a good example, and such people would hardly be in my list of people who deserved some consideration, if not sympathy. I have yet to study the ways of these hoards who reach the top. Perhaps all inefficient and insecure governments would afford shelter and protection to such people.

On the whole, our country should not get fooled and damned again and again. The future generation should not make the mistakes of their fathers and grandfathers. There are many fake products around us glittering on the surface. When students indulge in violent demonstrations, destroy public properties, ravage university campuses and attack the authorities, one should ask where and who after all were wrong. Indeed, these younger men certainly have a point.

Nevertheless, there is history to record that all such Paleygars of the day are not deceiving people but deceiving themselves. A self-styled politician might say why after all, the rest of the people or even civil servants should be interested in politics when he thinks that it should

be his monopoly. That indeed is fear. This kind of fear is the dominant thing especially when the people are morally corrupt and absolutely dishonest. In that way I too caused some kind of fear to fellows and some of those men in those days even moved about in fear of even a school teacher. That's true, the politicians who rise up mysteriously are always afraid of flies.

Long after I left Coorg, a gentleman who had held responsible positions both in civil service and in politics, once wrote to me that: "I was feeling that with your independent ways of thinking and acting you could never be under somebody."

But that is not entirely true. I have been under so many but I would never tolerate deliberate mischief and vindictive ways—whoever he may be. I would not spare those "somebody-s" if they tell lies, cook up charges, tease public servants, shadow almost everyone and everywhere and so on. Maybe, all that they used to do against hundreds of people in those days, was, perhaps, due to human inadequacies. The evolution of human being from that of the stage of a brute is not yet complete despite some great minds, great discoveries, great inventions and even great voyages to other planets.

However, everyone tolerated that nonsense counting the days for the end of such a primitive regime of 1952 to 1956 in Coorg, which had reached a sickening stage within some months after it was installed. Many people were hiding their heads in desperate protection of their heads. Many people ran to them to say that: "In future, we would be your henchmen. Oh, lords, protect us". And, they did protect them. Anyway I thought that due to my

own public and private reasons to carry out my premeditated plan and walk out unmindful of the consequences. That was, however, taken after mature thought, and not out of provocation as some people presumed. That was a different matter. But I don't regret my action, and, on the other hand, I feel proud of the fact that I did not stay on there too long. That kind of collective tyranny against individual honour and freedom, wherever it is, could just be a curse.

After I left what happened, and who said what, was not my concern. But very many friends and welwishers including the then Education Officer and some members of the assembly of the party in power, told me that I should not have taken such a step without informing them. I told them that I got out due to my own personal reasons. That was partly true also. From the rest of the people, of course, I ran away. Some members of the legislative assembly were under the impression that I had faced a nuclear danger, and, therefore, they as well as some others, offered their services saying that they would take the issue on the floor of the local assembly. To all such kind gestures, I coolly poured cold water and then turned away from them. Such things were embarrassing to me. In such circumstances, people fail to understand or appreciate an individual's mental make up. I have seen when people in high positions resign their posts, the public and the newspapers suspecting their motives, but, in fact, it is a thing that the on-lookers could seldom reach the minds of the men concerned, - be the one who resigns a post with a huff - a sweeper or a governor.

The immediate effect of my resignation was that it hit

the charcoal business of Boggu. There was a sudden slump, but then he switched his plan to make use of my resignation as well as the book, to boost his deceptive trade. He went about to some men in the top as well as to those in the gutters, but he was careful to make me understand that he was doing things on his own. But then, it is no use now dealing with the affairs of such odd characters here.

There was a good lot of malicious comments too. Some like Appu and Kuppu said that I was forced to resign, some others standing at the street corners said the same thing in different words, and a braggart, and unfortunately a fly in my ointment, said that I quit lest the Government would eventually come to know all my crimes perpetrated for years, and according to him, about my working elsewhere for a month or two while on study leave from Mercara. Some others like Ayyu, Kaloo and Baloo went all over to find out if my father, grand-father and the great-grand-father had anything to do with my resignation. Similarly people like Guggu, Boggu and Daggu tried to feed their impulsive tongues and vicious hearts. It is such people who generally afford some spice to the life of others, otherwise the entire living would be stale and tasteless.

I may here warn the readers that I am telling these things here not as though it was myself alone who had had such experiences but to make it clear that these are the general characteristics of the society anywhere, and everywhere and, people like me are very few and those like others are very many, and they are there all over and always.

The comments on my resignation by most of the people either in my favour or against, did not count for much, and most of it was sheer gossip. But there was a chorus of condemnation of the regime of the day and that came from many people and of different walks of life. I don't want to tell all that here. However, I could confidently say that I was greatly pleased by the public reaction over my 'running away', and those of the public were responsible citizens. One said that those Government people had no religion nor any morals. Another dignitary said that those fellows in the Government were "very jealous after they saw" my book and he said that he had evidences for that. And yet another said that "those people are humiliating themselves by provoking the civil servants in this way. These people who said so did not belong to any political party either. Therefore, I had every reason to be satisfied by the reaction of the people over the action I had taken.

The Kodagu Weekly of the 24th December 1954, carried an article which gave an impression to the readers that it was supporting the action taken by me or sympathising with me, but actually what the man did was that he took advantage of my resignation to speak in support of the College Principal who was in trouble with the so-called Government.

There was some truth in my saying that I had resigned as I had "intended to go for some studies. I did try to find some avenue to go to England and to that end I had discussed with some planters like Bucknall and Bull who had just left for their country. I wrote also to certain foreign academies in that connection and that was

a hectic time for me. The Kodava Education Fund, in the meantime, had sanctioned some loan for my contemplated trip. But the whole thing ended as a knotty problem from which I could not escape.

The immediate effect of all that, however, was that instead of my going abroad, another half-a-dozen young men took the tip from me and left for further studies elsewhere, and some of them were good enough to admit that I afforded them both inspiration and incentive to go ahead.

"Yes", I said nodding my head with full agreement with what they said. I supplied that inspiration and incentive not only to them but to many others as well, and I know where they are now and what they are doing.

About four years before my leaving that school, once in the staff room an old colleague of mine had rightly forecast that I was "just a bird of passage. One day or the other", he said, "Muthanna would quit. You will see that", he asserted.

I heard him say that, but I simply sat blinking, and now, here I write that.

Impressive were the words expressed by another teacher when I had just left, that: "You did so much and now you are leaving.... --at last".

Yes, and, at last I left.

I was invited for some parties that they had arranged for me, and one of which was by the students of the teachers' training school, where also I was teaching. I politely declined to participate in all that.

Friends told me to explain the whole thing that had happened in order to make the public know of the things

through the newspaper articles or lectures. I was not enthusiastic to do even that, and I told them that I was in no mood to do all that. But when more and more people seemed to have been taking interest in me I certainly found that as a nuisance to me, and, therefore, I went into my hide-out. I was safe there for some time.

70. "RATHER BATTLE UPWARDS AND ONWARDS "

The reading of my astral signs by a couple of experts, one from the West and the other from the East, was as below :

".....We have had to calculate your own personal Guide on the full factors of your date of birth, and we should say that you tend to possess many of the positive factors of your Sign. You do have a special type of personality, and it can be said to be rather pleasant and intriguing, for you in many ways, the type of person who is responsible for the creation of your own Destiny. There is around you an aura of a rather independent and self-sufficient air. No one could say that you are conventional and blindly follow others. No, my friend, you would rather battle upwards and onwards by your own desires and power. You have that very honest, reliable and genuine air about you which allows people to trust you. It should not take long for anyone in authority to know that you can be placed in high position of trust. You have a certain mild temper, and rather generous, can be proud, loyal and sympathetic. Nevertheless, you are

easily aroused when everything crosses your principles. You tend to associate yourself with the ancient ideals; you have a liking for grace, beauty and chivalry. Your sympathy lies more in the method of having a respect for class distinction and the traditions of your country.....

* Capricorn, the tenth sign of the zodiac, is a Cardinal Earth Sign, and it is ruled by the planet Saturn. Determination, ambition, perseverance, tenacity, strength, great powers of endurance, a pronounced talent for management and administrationare some of the qualities endowed by Capricorn. The positive type Capricorn is an individual of great integrity and reliability. They are cautious, conservative, possess a strong sense of duty and a capacity and willingness to work very hard. Setbacks and reverses that would stop most people dead in their tracks do not discourage or depress Capricornians.....

* You may find yourself drawn to archaeology, to ancient history and a study of the past. You can be very critical at times and when this side of your nature is aroused then you can make your mind up so fast your words out-rush your wisdom and you say things that hurt. You have an ambition. This is symbolised in your Sign of the goat, an animal that tries to climb to the top even if the path is hard, steep or rugged. Now there is a negative side which must be avoided. Never allow your charm and kindness to be so ruined by ambition that people regard you as callous. We know that you have rather high ideals. Your thoughts and views are extremely profound. Your outward

appearance of being modest and shy hides the fact that you are very determined. Once you have made up your mind your perseverance is terrific.

"Your approach to life is soberly and some social circles may find you too serious. You are not exactly the lover of money but you find it nice to have. You have tend to be proud of relatives, never neglect them, especially the elderly. You are a hard worker, one of the most industrious of the Zodiac and your accomplishments are always admirable. Education is a solemn part of your life. You know that training and knowledge are the basis of all good work and will never neglect this area. You form a philosophy with which you can most life and do not care for the more high-flown thoughts of the philosophers. To you religion is chiefly a social form. Industry and enterprise are the hallmarks of your life and you want to associate with both career and community life....."

This is a lengthy statement of facts with its scientific intricacies and details.

The very next day of my going home to stay on in my seclusion, a soothsayer came from somewhere and told my father in my absence that, "Your son who has just come home has to go away sooner or later to a far away place, and that is certain."

That's what he said, and no one had then believed all that he said especially when he was a wandering mendicant who had emerged all so suddenly and mysteriously. The old man heard what he said with great interest and then passed on those words to me.

At another quarter another reader of palms told in respect of my three-year old son that he would have all his education and 'a brilliant career' in foreign countries.

A little later in 1956, an old village school master of Goldsmith's description had rightly forecast in a humorous vein that: "Once Muthanna is out from here one could never get him back ; You will see that", he asserted.

Yes, they saw that, and myself too. And, that was what he said standing along the footpath amidst a dense jungle.

All this, however, was interesting. I have already said that I was a good worker in my own fields and farms even from the days of my early youth. That habit continued. Once after a few months and while at home when I was literally in my rags, I dashed against another mendicant. I had just come from the field after working. I found my mother busy talking to one such man again. As I approached the house she told the man that I was only a labourer there. But the man would not take it so. He challenged the old lady and said that "the man in rags is not just that. He will be away in quest of higher things and soon you will see that he will be up somewhere."

That was what he firmly said. My mother was teasing him stating that I was just a worker in jungles and so did I appear to have been. But the man would not budge. He stuck to his views and I stood amazed by the way the man was using his mystic powers. Most of the things that he said had proved to have been correct.

The man left the place but made it clear that the affairs of everyone at home and even that of those cheaters

and swindlers and back-biters around there, were revolving around my fate. He was correct, and that had been so all the time.

In April 1955, I went to Delhi to find some job opportunities but that happened to have been a pleasure trip as well. I did some library work, sold some copies of my books, observed the parliament sessions and also called on a couple of ministers. All this did not take me too far. On my way back at Madras, a friend took me to a certain place where a man forecast, again accurately, that it would take some more time for me to get away from Coorg, and that I was sure to go. Later, I returned home to wait for the day till I had to finally go.

While at home the most amusing thing that I could see was that all kinds of stray dogs, bitches, donkeys and dunces too became my advisers. Of course, I could also see a good many wolves and jackals in the village jungle, and a few odd characters like Guggu, Boggu, Gupta and such fellows who continued to pry and probe into my activities. That was, of course, their sickness with which they suffered acutely.

I avoided people and led a strictly secluded life, and did some serious reading and writing, actively got involved in digging and planting, and finally landed in frustration because what I saw around me was not as promising as I had imagined. I found the life in villages awful, rotten, and vicious, and I was terribly disappointed. My vain effort to effect some improvement at home were all a tremendous waste of money, waste of effort, waste of energy and waste of time. As rightly foretold by many, it was certainly amazing that if all that I did there including the plants

that I had planted had taken roots, my 'roots' also would perhaps have gone deeper there, but the providential ordain was to uproot me from there before the plants took roots, and those plants refused to take roots despite my 'roots' trying to stick on there.

A couple of incidents that took place during the time I was in my village were interesting, and those are well-worth recording here. Once it happened that a hut of my neighbour was accidentally gutted by fire that crept from the jungle where I was working. The owner of the hut got furious and reported the matter to the police and then claimed compensation for the loss. Anyway, after talking over the affair, his soul was satisfied by the offer of a token sum which he just took to see that I was 'punished' for my carelessness. But somehow the man was not so sane either. His habit was to be always at the police station thinking that as his another home. The last I saw of that erratic man was when he was very badly and even brutally man-handled and wildly beaten after hurling him unto the slushy fields by a group of people who were his other neighbours.

And yet another incident was that on a fine sunny day I was struck by the Saturnian influence and attacked a labourer for having lied and cheated me. This caused some commotion among the tribe, and therefore it was decided to talk over the matter. The people in support of the assaulted man demanded money as compensation to which I agreed because that was the short-cut to finish off things of that sort, but taking advantage of my willingness to pay, those people claimed a bigger amount. At that stage a Panchayat was created, and after that I remained

passive. They decided upon an amount that I was made to pay with my right hand to which I agreed, and later in the evening of the same day when things cooled down it was privately settled that I take back the three-fourth of the sum with my left hand on the basis of the work turned out in the jungle by those men. That was alright but the men never came to work regularly. I could realise a fair slice of the amount that I had paid after a considerable pressure on them. However, within a few months I had to leave the place, and, therefore, I tried to forget all about it later on.

After this a couple of leading planters of the village slyly confessed that they too had undergone through such an experience a few years prior to that and they had to pay heavily even in those days when no one had heard of any rights and privileges of the labour class of people. Generally people express such things only after they find that some others too had fallen in line with them, otherwise, like Guggu, Boggu and Daggu, they would keep quiet and then enjoy sneakily at the lot of others.

At regular intervals I used to spend some days at Bangalore and Mysore just to enjoy those most enjoyable Kannada films, most of which were certainly good in comparison to the pictures in the other Indian languages.

I attended the Madras University Centenary Celebrations, and I was an intruder there. Well-dressed and with a roll of papar in hand I walked in straight, and the student volunteers at the gates just let me in thinking that I was a sort of professor who had gone there, perhaps, from Timbuctoo or some such place.

General Cariappa had returned from Australia in

1956. He too was present at the University Centenary Celebrations, and I saw him there in Madras a couple of times. Recommending my name to certain Education Boards, he wrote that :

“Muthanna who hails from Coorg, is a fine young man with very good academic qualifications. He has very pleasant manners about him, and will, I am sure, do well in any job given to him commensurate with his academic qualifications——”.

Thus began a shake-up that I had to go through, and it did start with the soundings here and there. But before I could embark on a new life at a new place somewhere in North India, I thought of conducting a tour of some parts of Karnataka. That was a sort of explorative tour because that was the time when I was busy on my History of Karnataka. However, now in April 1957, I set out, and then roaming along the green beds of Hassan district, surveying the excellent but now dilapidated fort of Manjrabad, and enjoying the lovely sceneries of the extensive coffee and tea plantations of Hassan and traversing along the scenorial ghats of Chikmagalur, I proceeded to Dharwar where I was one of the silent observers of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat, presided over by the poet K.V. Puttappa. Also I renewed my contact with some old friends. I met in connection with the book that I was preparing, the Chief Minister of the State, who had inaugurated the Sahitya Parishat. I spent three or four days at the Karnataka University library, and also spent a precious two hours with the poet D.R. Bendre at his residence. I attended a few religious discourses at the

Hubli Mutt where I failed to find any religion, ritual, sanctity or anything godly in that crowded city and much crowded Mutts. Things were of a very sad disappointment to me.

I travelled to Gokarna, a show-piece of the hidden gods of stone in the dark rooms of some old structures which they call temples. People inside and outside the temples are ill-fed and ill-clothed but stories are numerous to take away the visitors from that scene of poverty to the nearby rocky hills to say that the gods of yore had once lived there or performed great miracles. Those stories are just coined around those brooks, springs rock precipices etc. No gods seem to be feeding anyone there and for centuries those poor Hindus were fed only by those mythological humbugs.

During my visit to Bijapur on another occasion, I was impressed only by the Gol Gumbaz. The environs of that city put up a deserted look with the scattered, unattended and uncared for old constructions and ruins beneath which the Mother Earth must have soaked with the blood of thousands of Hindus and Muslims of the by-gone days. It is better that one forgets history when one visits such dry and dreary places and simply return after enjoying the vibrating echoes of the Gol Gumbaz.

Well, after travelling through the spectacular landscape and dense woods along Kumta, Ankola and other coastal towns, I reached the spectacular Jog Falls where I stayed for a night sleeping to the roaring and yet soothing sounds of that over-pouring Falls.

I spent a night at Sringeri. This famous place known for its Mutt, was another awful scene of tombs of the dead

priests who wasted money on their own comforts and glorification. Barring the small richly sculptured temple attributed to the workmanship of Jakkanacharya, the area around looks like a vast graveyard. The poor people living nearby starved and the priests enjoyed, and it is said that those monks were the masters of Hindu theology. Maybe, but I found that they failed miserably to serve the people. All what is said of religion seem to have been buried deep under those insipid structures of brick and mortar which are, of course, a deadly wasteful display of their monkish ego. With head bowed with shame and sorrow, I walked along the banks of the softly flowing River Tunga.

My next place of halt was Dharmastala. That is a place where a zamindar enjoyed some position of honour. The founder of this venerable centre might have been a religious man but his successors to that honourable position need not be so. As I watched the behaviour of the then zamindar from a distance and as a detached observer, I was taken aback. That man was simply arrogant. He was unreasonably indecent and used all sorts of obscene, abusive and wicked words to scare away the people who had been to him to seek his help. He spent hours and hours in his inner apartment like an ancient Nawab, and I did not take the trouble of knowing all about his herem. The poor people were thinking that he was busy inside, but, in fact, that crafty and lazy man was literally indifferent to the sorrows and struggles of the world around him.

Well, such men might pose as though great and good in the presence of political leaders and literary men just in order to win their favour and thus get some publicity for their pretentious modesty and religion. I have already said

behind how I happened to go to the Udipi temple despite the fact that the venerable founder of that great Mutt was himself an universalist in religion and who was against castes, the system of untouchability etc. However, to put things straight, I must say that these Dharmastala, Sringeri, Gokarna, Hubli and many such places were all a type of dens where the name of God is used and misused to promote immorality, ignorance, poverty etc among people so that a few ego-centred individuals may live at the cost of thousands who simply struggle in life for just a morsel of food. People should yet look into those dens with their eyes, minds and hearts open, and that's all I venture to state here in brief.

My journey along the Malnad region was quite enjoyable. The most heartening and spectacular and enchanting scene that could overwhelm one was from Agumbe and the Charmadi ghats. Indeed it is there that one could find God and not in the much publicised Mutts that put up an appearance of gamblers' dens. From the summits of the Agumbe Ghat, I breathed that soft beautiful and musical air of the vast universe that was around me. I rested and relaxed at many places of the sort and returned to Coorg after a two-day stay at Mangalore. This was in May 1957.

Days passed on but the days were not far off. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood leads on to fortune". My father passed away on the 24th July 1957. The incident speaks for itself. He was not there to know that I would leave home the moment he departed from home. Among the condolence letters that I received on the occasion, those from General Cariappa and Biddanda

Kushalappa were the most wellwritten and soothing, which I am glad to acknowledge here. Anyway, exactly after twelve days and after performing the last rites in that connection, I packed off to North India as a first lap of my sojourn from continent to continent. However, here again I repeat that I refrain from narrating the details of my life outside Coorg in order to minimise the scope of this work.

71. THAT GUGGU—THE INCORRIGIBLE

After I left Coorg, I went there only once in two years or three years—in 1958, 1960, 1962, 1965 and 1968. Things concerning me and my interests there in Coorg during this period have already been told in the pages behind, in greater detail but what really happened in 1965 deserved some attention here. That was a tale of a saga of betrayals from everyone and from every side. When some higher and unknown power wants to decide things, our minds get clouded and eyes blurred, and all the so called clever and mighty fellows also should succumb to those divine tricks. Knowing very well that the people with whom I was dealing were already the known crooks with black records, I did deal with them, and I had it. I was then in Ethiopia and from there I went to India. The Sunday Standard forecast for the year 1965, seemed to have been literally correct as far as myself was concerned. It said that :

* People will pop in and out of your life in a quite surprising way..... Money matters need careful handling in the first half of the year. A financial

squeeze could far too easily arise June is potentially a tricky month when cross currents and complications make you uncertain. Rumours will abound and misleading facts and figures will be presented".

Yes, they certainly presented. That was exactly what had happened. I had no business to behave like an idiot after dealing with a number of people at many places, and successfully too. The Saturn began to work on me and 'beggars' popped into my house 'begging' for help almost a little before midnight. It happened to me long back while I was in Mangalore, in Madras, in Delhi and everywhere. I had not refused anyone to give 'my mite to any 'beggar' but barring one or two small cases, I have successfully recovered all that I had given in the form of just loans. Anyway just two months before I left Ethiopia, came to me a devil at midnight asking me to stand surety for him as he had to go to his country on some urgent summons, and the Education Ministry there would only accept me as a surety for the man because they would not rely upon any fellows whom he had suggested. The same case with the local British Council also, and they would issue any number of books, if I stood guarantee for any number of people, whereas they would not do so in the case of others. So to this man I agreed to be his surety, and then he left, and later, for all that I did for him, he paid me back with ingratitude. But the things were alright soon as far as this case was concerned though that should have served me as a warning. But it didn't. Thus began the year (1965) for me.

On the eve of my leaving Ethiopia, I had left some

money with a fellow instructing him to remit it later to England. Why should I entrust that job to him was also not of my own making; the circumstances happened as such and it was beyond my control. Later the man caused sufficient headache for a sufficient length of time but finally he was plugged alright. Not a penny was allowed to be cheated by him, and, had he failed me he would have been kicked out of that country. I brought the whole thing to such an extent, and during the process, I booked some lawyers also for their dishonest way of dealing in the affair. I did the entire job wonderfully well with myself in England and he in Ethiopia.

Such steadfast fighting and achieving things were appreciated by many at both the countries while I kept on tossing letters over the seas, and the fuller story of all that would be equal to any stunt novels sold in the bazaars. But [these and other many things were all my foreign adventures and I do not like to cover those stories in this narrative. However, when it came to the home front, I happened to be just a mug.

To start with, I would tell the story of one Guggu, and this Guggu is different from Guggu the bastard. But Shakespeare might say that, "It does not matter, roast him alive; pluck just the name out of his heart", and so on. This Guggu had nothing to do with money as far as myself was concerned, but then his malicious make up was itself a curse for others. He was a miserable failure in the job that he was doing but in the good old days he just carried on, but with voluminous files of complaints on his professional incompetence and misbehaviour. Everyone knew him as a great pedestrian in many streets of

Coorg in those times.

I had known this man ever since my boyhood. He was famous as a miser. Even when he wrote letters to men in the higher quarters, he would use only a postcard, and he would never spend a penny on a sheet of paper. He would walk miles and miles just to save a few paises. He would attend weddings, get mixed up in the crowd, eat, and then escape without giving at least a few paises as gift to the bride or the groom, as the cases might have been. People knew him in many other ways, too. I was warned by a couple of responsible people to get away from him, and that was in 1940s. They said that Guggu was a menace as a tale-bearer and a liar.

I still do not recollect how he used to join me on every alternative day. However, I would not be indifferent to him, and with the elders, I used to be always polite. That was in a way a kind of weakness in me. The main idea of Guggu's joining me was to dig out news from me as I was in contact with the people here and there in the course of my activities. When I was trying to raise funds to a Kavi's memorial fund, this Guggu was the man who was speaking about that poor Kavi in derogatory and disparaging terms.

Contrast this same Guggu's treachery of those days with his hypocrisy of these days when he worships that same Kavi by writing or speaking about him in the public and by trying to sing a couple of songs of his as though he knew anything of them. All this is just a cheap game to pass on his weary days.

Guggu's son was in the school where I was working. At a function that I had got up, I had asked the boy to do

some mimicry on the stage like his father, but his father who was my street friend persuaded the boy not to take part in it. Later I learnt that Guggu did everything to sabotage the programme, and he was my 'friend'. What can I do?

Such incidents of mischievous dealings and instigations were many and he used to go on with that kind of nasty things all along, and many of my seniors had known him better than I did. Once he wrote some critical remarks on the answer paper of his son against the teacher concerned, and, therefore, the rest of the teachers summoned him and impeached him openly for his ugly behaviour.

Having had known that he was a thorough failure in his profession, Guggu tried to show himself as a lover of art but even that was officially put down by the authorities saying that 'he does not know' anything of the sort. In 1948, he wrote a long article on art and artists and gave that to me to publish that in the journal that I was editing. I did not feel like sparing space to Guggu's bogus writings even though he was acting as a 'friend' of mine. I showed that article to Biddanda Kushalappa who was then the headmaster. He said that Guggu was simply a fraud in the art that he was claiming to know. That article was "not worth publishing", he said.

However, my difficulty was that I could not escape from Guggu. He used to take delight perhaps in my sobre and harmless company, and he found me congenial for his time-serving tactics. Prying and probing into others' affairs was his only hobby, and if he could get one news of some sensational sort that would give him

immense pleasure for many days, and he would go to any one to tell that such and such a thing happened to such a man and so on.

After I left the job there, Guggu continued to hunt after my shadow but he would not get me any more so easily to listen to his bluffs. After a few years he wrote to me two or three post cards, but I would not answer him although I never kept any letter unanswered.

Years passed on, and Guggu like Gupta, Kaloo, Baloo, Chubbu and many other sneaky fellows watched me where I was going. Some of the things about me, that I would not know myself, they would know, especially Guggu. And in Guggu's case, he had a deep-seated design and he alone knew what it was.

Guggu also found me writing books, articles etc. even in foreign countries, and he knew that some of them had some publicity value. He heard my name outside his village and outside Coorg Samsthaana which the bandits ruled in the remote past. Guggu now thought to make use of the situation, and decided to go about here and there even out of Coorg to some meetings and introduced himself as a friend of mine. Guggu got himself introduced there at the meeting that he attended, stating that, "This Mr. Guggu, is a friend of Muthanna". Guggu smiled with great satisfaction, but that was a tragedy for me. What a wonderful 'friend' for me. All that nasty game he played after his three scores and ten years of meaningless life.

In the evening of Guggu's life, his life-time 'friend' Ningu was the man who showed him the way to build up his fallen image. Therefore, it was a desperate attempt

of Guggu to do something by hook or by crook, and Ninggu, the master-opportunist, tried to make use of Guggu to raise his own shattered prestige also by dictating some lies to Guggu to write in the latter's scripts and articles. Thus Guggu and Ninggu joined together to do some self-publicity work by some such crude means.

But then it was Guggu who was dreaming me for no fault of mine. He went about asking every dog and cat and brat as to when I would be visiting Coorg. He went from house to house talking about me and to tell them that I was writing 'many books' (this is not true), that I did not care for money (this is a lie) and that I was spending my money on my books. (This is a miser's jealousy mixed up with some very poisonous venom.) Talking thus in and out of the season, he created ill-feeling between one and many in which game, like Boggu and others, he too was an expert.

He went about telling my old mother and others to write to me that Guggu was very very anxious to see me. Yes, he was very anxious, and in fact, he was very sick. I knew that, and now after many years, I informed him that I would be seeing him when I was there. He immediately replied to me not minding the cost of the postage, and stated everything of his sickness, and he wrote all that quite unwittingly. Now it was he who made me say all these things.

Yes, I went to Coorg. This was in 1965. Guggu waited, yes waited for me, at the house where I was due to visit in Mercara, and then forced me to pay a visit to his house. Very much against my wishes I agreed but arranged the programme in such a way that while visiting another

place I could just pass through that way for a minute or two. But Guggu would not leave me so easily. He waylaid near his house on that day with a small packet of raw meat. These things certainly aggravated my headache. How could one escape from the clutches of devils? What's the result? Guggu undertook another one or two special trips to Mercara and Virajpet to tell all his gutter friends saying that I had visited his house. Poor me; I was certainly let down. What can I do?

A few days after that at Virajpet, I was again caught between Guggu and his shadow. I tried to escape from his notice, but could'nt. I did not feel like asking him why he was strolling all over. After a few minutes he suddenly told me that he would go with me to the place where I was staying. Why? To see my children! What a rascal, I thought, and as I was thinking like that he directed me to the bus that was going that way, and boarded the bus before I thought of doing so, and, of course, I had to pay his bus fare because he was pretending as though he was busy talking to me. He came to the house where I was staying but the man never took any trouble to see my kids nor at least pretend to pass on a word to them.

These are the designs of crooks. They are there and everywhere. All that Guggu was doing was for his propaganda purposes but my difficulty was that I could not be rude to him after deliberately avoiding him for many years

I left for England. It was Guggu who then became my drummer-man after that. His letters that he used to write or getting written by others in order to show others

that he was corresponding with me, revealed that he was a pathetic figure, very much sick, totally frustrated and even wretched. But I tried very hard to put him in the way but all that was futile. His own friend Ninga said that, "Leave Guggu alone, he is a fraud".

But my trouble was that he was unnecessarily a nuisance to me. He would continue to carry his viciousness too far and even as far as Mysore and Bangalore. He went to my printers, book-sellers and to my friends to tell them that he was my 'friend'. The readers should not think that I was exaggerating things. Once he sneakily passed on a note to my printer telling him to insert that in a corner of my book that was under print at that time. That note was to say to the readers that he was my friend. Hell be to this damn friend, I thought. All this and many other things he did, all the time bragging to the disgust of others and to the disgrace of himself.

All the same, I took Guggu's above mischief very seriously although I was in England at that time. I asked him why he had approached my printer without informing me and then gave him that note. Of course, he denied doing that, but I knew that like Boggu, this man too went to people to make himself known that way. He would tell them that, "I am Guggu". They would ask him, "Which Guggu are you?" In reply he would say, "You know so and so, I am his friend, and my name is Guggu". Finally they would say, "Oh, you are such and such a Guggu. Sit down Mr. Guggu", and, then Guggu would sit down.

Anyway, when I asked Guggu why he passed on that note, Guggu unashamedly denied the whole thing in his letter of the 11th October 1967, saying that he was "not acquainted with the printer". That kind of denial was characteristic of him. That was a damn lie uttered by the one of past 70. The funniest part of the thing was that he forgot that he wrote sometime before that on the 17th October 1965, stating that, "I visited Bangalore and met your printer."

That's that. There is no use of wasting any more ink and paper here for Guggu, or for his friend Ningu who, for his own advantage, infused a fresh lease of evil spirit unto Guggu to go about with a drum or without a drum. Hypocritical writings, blackmailing others and deceiving the gullible people around him, one of whom was myself, were all the late midnight adventures of Guggu's later nights. When I told him once that a man blatantly cheated me, Guggu at once said, that, "Why do you worry? That's nothing. Everyone does it."

I was simply taken aback at Guggu's above comments. I then thought that he was a security risk in a civilized society. I felt very sorry for him. I had to soon take him to a street restaurant in Mercara and return to him his food that he had served me in his house only two days before that, because I felt that it was dangerous to be fed with a meal by such sick souls. My efforts for years to bring him to his sense failed and my entreaties to him not to be hypocritical and deceptive, were of no avail. Yes, that's about Guggu, though that's not all. But I must stop here.

72. JAGUAR—SPOTTED JAGGU AND BOGGU

All said and done, I had committed grave crimes to get involved in the ugliest of the situations. Trying to help undeserved causes, undesirable elements, ungrateful wretches etc. are no doubt sins of great magnitude, the effect of which would recoil on such over-zealous entrepreneurs one day or the other. In my early days, I used to be enthusiastic in my own small sphere only to find too soon that all good things done need not pay back equally good dividends.

I shall now illustrate one such case. When I used my little influence as a little man I did it first as a teacher to help the deserving young students to get promoted. All who were in the margin of the data fixed for a pass, were supported by me to be pushed up. I used to derive some pleasure out of it and nothing else, and not even a word of thanks from those fellows for whom the teachers would usually help.

All the same, I just had one fly in my ointment. Here I might call him Boggu. Every year during the examination time it is usual with some parents to go about after teachers on behalf of their children who would fall behind in their performances. Similarly Boggu's mother was one who was pestering me to see her son was pushed up from one class to another, and for about five years I 'pushed' him, and it seemed that at last I got myself pushed alright. Boggu's marks in any subject would not be anywhere more than 25 per cent. In some subjects he would score even one digit marks. These things, no doubt, seem like a fiction.

But it is Boggu's mother's plea that used to move me

although I was always against pushing up such undesirables because such actions would naturally contribute to lower the standards of education. However, in this case I forgot every such so called principle and saw that the fellow passed.

Boggu, however, used to manage to hide his head, rather the sneaky head, from me all the time and all those years, but soon after the results were out he would bluff others in the fashion of a professional bluffer stating that he passed through his own efforts and with very good marks. But then my mistake was that I did not check such nonsense then and there but preferred to ignore that in the interest of the financial position of his parents in the event of the fellow repeating in the same class for a year more or for years.

Who says that I would not attempt the impossible if I want to achieve things? Boggu's middle school Board examination marks were just in the order of 9, 16, 21, 24 and 27, and that was all his 'hard work'. The fellow hid his head alright, but I could not escape his mother's plea to somehow kick him up. But how to stride around Coorg in search of strange people who were the examiners, and, yet I did it. I sent word to them along with the examination number of the fellow. One or two of them promptly obliged me by increasing the marks and one or two even showed me the answer papers which just fetched a digit mark or a few more. However, I saw that all of them did something somewhere. Finally when the results came, I was pleased and satisfied that I could help one substantially, but the cruel joke was that the fellow spared no time to go round and tell others that he passed

by his own hard work and with good marks. That's what he did every year. The fellow should have been the son of Guggu in that respect but I can confidently say that Boggu's father also was in no way better than his already perverted son.

Boggu had still three more years to go in the school. By this time, I also knew that the fellow would one day become a social menace anywhere. The next year, for the fourth time, I refused to interfere in his case because I thought that I would be responsible for spoiling him who was a crook in the making. But the old lady would not leave me go, and, therefore, that year too I saw that he passed, and all his original marks are there and must be there in the school even now.

But in the following year I began to think seriously. Did I do a right thing by obliging a treacherous lad and his innocent mother? Certainly I did blunder but it was a late realization. Whatever that may be, in the fifth year I made it a point that I would not interfere in his promotions and that was mainly because I had begun to see him going round back-biting, tale bearing, instigating and prejudicing and that became his regular pastime. But in the following year, I saw that he went up, and after that he lingered there and then automatically dropped himself out. His two brothers were also the same but, with slight differences between them, but, on the whole, the same.

Now after rescuing this kind of characters I was in more trouble. Some others in the neighbourhood, and this time a girl's case, was brought to me. "When Boggu the bluffer was pushed up from class to class for nothing at

all, why not my daughter ", said Kaloo the clerk. But his daughter was equally bad in her marks which I still have, and moreover, she was not a student in my school. Here again it was Boggu who instigated and intensified the differences and quarrels saying that I could have pushed her also if I had wanted to. Now see, where at last I landed myself after helping the wicked ones ?

These are no doubt the menacing characters anywhere. The causes for these things are not very difficult to see. Firstly, it is the consciousness of oneself of having had fallen behind and left in the streets. Secondly, the psychological kicks and pricks of inferiority complex, thirdly the ugly characteristics of ingratitude towards the one whom he knew, and fourthly a cruel tendency to take delight to create intrigues among own people and among the neighbourhood and sneakily enjoy the reaction of his own misdeeds, and many such crude motives prompted this man also to indulge in the kinds of the game in which he became an expert. Such green-eyed jealousy, malice, viciousness and all sorts of vices mixed up with flesh and blood and carved and fashioned in a dandy shape, are certainly a curse to any family or society. Shakespeare in 'King Henry VI' said that :

"When envy breeds unkind division

There comes the ruin; there begins confusion."

In "King Lear" that poor king was under a similar dilemma, and it is said that :

"Ingratitude-thou marble-hearted fiend,

More hideous when thou show'st thee

than the sea-monster !"

Later when Boggu was left at home as a school drop-out, he took to some trading where even my shadow alone had to benefit him in many ways. He had already begun to cheat his own people. His mother would tell me that crops were poor when everyone else would reap a record crop. Boggu's father would say that the entire responsibility was given to his son, and the son would give contract of all his fake products of cardamom, coriander, ginger, pepper, 'borer' and other crops and tell his parents and others that he got only so much; how much? he would reveal only one fourth of the amount that he actually collected. His dealings, as he used to hide his head, were all secret. In his mode of business and money-making, there was no soft-corner in his heart, if at all he had one, not even to his parents. The result was that within three or four years the whole farm and field was almost laid waste with no proper cultivation attention or whatsoever. The fellow exploited everything to his advantage, neglected the farms, roamed about on the plea of doing coriander business where he mercilessly cheated a good many—all in the fashion of high class bandicoots. He even befriended those writers and servants and coolies to cheat his parents and everyone else.

How this man was left without being caught when two of his brothers were dragged into the courts, was itself a different matter. Even then he had the share of his dismissals, perhaps, more than ones mainly due to the money defalcations when he was in some kind of ginger firms with some ginger groups. Even then my shadow was there to boost his business, and in order to cover up all that he took to blackmail others, and myself not excluded, and, therefore, I still shudder to think how after all the seeds

work and sprout and then grow poison within them.

Of course, every one has seen such people and I write this not as a great news, but personally I think that I could have avoided such a man turning that way had I been a bit shrewd. I thought that I was just nourishing a pet but that happened to be a cobra as it grew up which like a leopard would 'never change its spots'. Apart from all these, his contact with women was awful and that had exceeded all limits. Once a letter to him dated the 2nd November 1955, by a woman, was passed on to me by a third person, and that was as below :

" Your prompt and sweet letter to hand.....I find myself dreading the night, and it is only at night that I feel the loneliness; my thoughts are for ever turning to youThe few short moments we had, were so nice, and I find myself wishing that you were near me . . . I do not have to think what I would do because I know that I would just want you to go on kissing and kissing me ...I find myself at a loss for words, so let me close with lots and lots of everything for you only".

Yes, lots and lots of others were also there for him only, and that was his side business. His mother looked all over to fix him for one woman but that was not so easy for obvious reasons. Even his bribing and bragging and denigrating others did not take him too far to get one even after he thought that he got one. All this one could attribute to Boggu's father who went about blackmailing his own sons and who had known for no hard work or to the over-all development of his farm and family. For all that

he was, Boggu taught him by swindling and cheating him out-right.

Of course, villains are always there, and they might smile, but if a villain like Boggu in the absence of his brother in about the 1950s, goes to a revenue office to see that the name of his brother was left out in the records there, then it is not a character issue,—it is certainly a question of some serious mental disease. People like these might think that no one could know of their acute disease with which they suffer but that sort of ignorance in them is itself very dangerous to the society.

Once that same man caught me in Bangalore and dogged me all over. He followed me to the newspaper offices, cultural centres, and so on. He would never let me know his deep-seated design but I could make it out too soon. After I left the place, he immediately called on on all those people whom I met to exploit them in as many ways as possible especially in his business activities. Indeed, that was what he was doing all the time even from the ancient days. But then he is a stupid. However much he tried to hide his ways of going about, I would know all those mean tricks of his through the very same people whom he saw. Of course, Guggu was also the same. These people's viciousness, ingratitude, jealousy and such vices were so much apparent that that they did not know to conceal all that. But how long one could hide one's head in this 'small' world?

I did not yet reach my research zone to ascertain how much he bribed to get himself recommended to be sent for some sight-seeing trip to some country for a couple or so months. I knew that to make all his dubious business

succeed, he would take me or my career, my books and even my resignation from the job, to spice his shoddy dealings before his corrupt men. It was only by using the name of the one whom he always maligned he could get through, and he went to all my associates, friends and even the newspaper offices where my articles or books were printed to seek some publicity and all that he did sneakily and stealthily. All this looked like indulging in prostitution in the nights and showing up otherwise in day-lights. That was true in the case of Boggu, and all that was his hellish *thamaasha* also.

These types of men are many in the Indian streets and one need not go in search of them. Apart from the psychological aspect of this sort of behaviour, those fellows by maligning something good, something better or someone better in some way, derive as much pleasure as they would derive from illicit sex acts in which art they would naturally be more proficient. This over-dose of jealousy in them is a serious mental disease. They are the persons who feel terribly inadequate in every way. They usually create an imaginary opponent and hunt after his shadow because they badly need an outlet to ventilate their malice. They would not rest quiet without imputing motives on all that was said to them with good intentions.

It does not end there. These kinds of people are incapable of judging others as superior or at least better than them. Their evil talent to pry and probe into others' affairs, their extraordinary gift to blabber things and thus bring differences among people, among the kith and kin and even among the husbands and wives, is something that has to be diagnosed by the psychiatrists alone and none

else. I could see these things in a great measure in Boggu, Jaggu, Guggu, Kaloo, Baloo and many others. That is the way they keep themselves active. They are certainly 'dangerous' and 'lean and hungry' in the Shakespearean sense of the term.

These people have no taste for any art, they love no music, they are artificial in their manners, and they absent-mindedly keep on grinning. They have no love for what they profess or pretend to be professing. For them the entire literature is just 'tales told by an idiot, and the Taj Mahal is just white marble piled up, and a beautiful painting is only colours spilled. They are incapable of seeing things in true perspective. If such people take to politics the result would be what we see now. These home-wreckers after disturbing the peace of their own family and society, step into a broader arena to wreck the things with an itching to show up and that itch later turns into a contagious eczema. Can't help.

Boggu's associate was Jaggu, a sly, deep and calculative figure of no consequence, and like the latter he was also a high school drop-out. When this stupid fellow shrewdly and sheepishly hatched a plot to steal my trust after playing some confidence trick on me, he did not know that the man on whom he leaned for support would himself extract a good deal out of him and much more than he would steal from my purse. But thieves should fall out one day or the other, and that has been their past record all through. As to this Jaggu's record of behaviour, it is best summed up in a letter of an innocent woman whom he cheated unashamedly. She wrote on the 6th December 1959, that :

"..... Jaggu has lost his case after getting himself dragged into the court of law, and he has lost everything.....He goes about the streets like a loafer..... He has not paid my money including his boarding expenses.....Loafers are always loafers and he is totally unreliable.....I have got a lot to say about this man but I have no time now.....More in person."

And I too have no time to write all about him here. The fellow who drags himself to the court of law by the one who did so much for him, need not have any decency left in him. And this is Jaggu who also remained unmarried like Boggu but managed to get a woman when the shadow of the man whom he sought to dupe alone could do the tricks, and all this is a long story. This man had rehearsed at least for six months to entrap the one who had unwittingly thought that he was trustworthy. Now it is beyond my power even to imagine how after all the wolves, jackals and jaguar-spotted beasts could all live together.

All this is a part of human existence, but the people who play such incorrigible roles doubtless require a considerable equipment of natural cheek to get away with fraud of various designs and dimensions managed either in a small scale or on a much bigger scale. Nor are such swindlers and cheaters and liars commonly repentant unless when doing time and hoping to get off some of it by what is called a good behaviour.

But whoever takes the risk of plunging into the crocodile ponds should know that there would be crocodiles. I dealt with people with whom I had no business to deal; I got myself involved in transactions in which I should not

have been involved, and I relied upon those on whom I had ample evidence in my own pocket to say that those were welknown rascals.

But that's not all life. All that was á side issue. Those are just flea-bites to the otherwise busy bodies although they are poisonous fleas. Such incidents ought to be there in everyone's life, or else there would be nothing for the afternoon gossips. That was the year 1965 for me. After that 40-days' stay in Coorg, and after completing a small book that I had begun to write, I left for England. There I was able to locate M S.H. Thompson, a former official of the Coorg Education department. He gave me a note of tribute that he paid to his friend about whom we had got up the book. After that in about a month or so, Mr. Thompson who was then about 92, passed away. It seemed to me that he lived that long just to pay that tribute to his friend. Almost at that time, I heard that Chubbu too had died. When Chubbu saw my book for the first time, and years back, he and his tribe had felt very sickly, and later when he heard that I had intended to go abroad, he behaved as though he was having a stroke, and that stroke however did strike him within a month or two after I had finally left.

If that was Chubbu, Boggu and Kaloo and others, had many sleepless nights, and they had felt the pangs of my departure very acutely and miserably for many days. Guggu was, of course, busy in streets and gutters as usual to announce that I had finally left and in that way he was my drummer boy. He went all over to say that I was corresponding with him, and all that he used to write to me were simply white lies, and with his age rising up every year

the man became cruder still with increasing frustration, and ran amuck all over. I failed miserably in my effort bring him to his senses. Neither could any devils improve such highly impudent beings. Unfortunately dog's tails could never be made straight.

What these people have been doing, scheming and manipulating have baffled me, and I do not know where I stand, and that's indeed a pity. But Guggu would say, "Why pity? Such things are common; such people are common; that's the world; you are still in the stone age" and so on. In fact, that's what he said. When these with this kind of crude sorts of people got into this sort of blackmailing business notions, it is not just a rat or a brat plague, it is a dreadful cancer. Social scientists have found it very hard to offer solutions for the destruction of the virus of this kind and only the medical scientists would or might succeed in doing something.

So when such people run their kitchen in their much delightful ways of this sort, I certainly feel that I am a misfit in this world despite all this noise that I am sometimes making. Verily Robert Louis Stevenson was quite right when he said that some people "have thoughts and desires that would shame hell".

73. MY LETTERS TO THE KODAVA SAMAJA

After I left Coorg, and later the country, I was in touch with some people of Bangalore, Madras and Bombay, and all that was on different subjects altogether. Later I began to write to some people in Coorg, like Guggu, and Jaggu, but my efforts to get them round hopelessly failed because they would 'not change their spots'. Kotera Chin-

nappa wrote a good many nice letters, and later on General Cariappa too replied to my letters, and in one such letter, of September 1965, he said, that :

" I congratulate you for your splendid spirit of adventure and of determination to get full value from life—creating opportunities on your own initiative—to achieve your aim. I wish you every success during your stay in England "

Later, when I became crazy to write all that I wrote in this book, I wanted money for its printing since no publisher would take such a book as this for his business. Therefore, I thought of the Kodava Samaja for some financial assistance, and on the 3rd June 1968, I wrote to them, and among other things, I also said that :

" Seven years back (in 1963), I had requested the Samaja through an article in a paper, to reprint the *Pattole Palame*, and distribute the copies widely and thus stop the criminal misappropriation of the copyright of the book at the hands of those who commit literary fraud..... "

" Apart from that, I have to point out to the Samaja which encouraged, financed and released the said book, 'Kodavas', that it contains a number of factual errors, wrong interpretations, perverse statements and absolutely wrong conclusions on many important topics "

This letter was acknowledged by the Secretary of the Samaja, dated the 18th June 1968, and he simply wrote that :

" I am glad that you have such energy, and devote so much time for writing this (long letter). I have no

comments on this, and the less said about it the better."

That was well said. What else could he say? To my request for assistance to get the book printed, he wrote all about their commitments and said that, "hope you will appreciate our position".

Yes, I appreciated their position.

On the 14th July 1968, I wrote to them another letter on something else, and then I took the opportunity to sound a note of caution regarding the Samaja expansion programme. I thought that that the Samaja itself was aiding and abetting the culture to wane fast by their activities, and, therefore, said, that:

"I see that the Samaja is fast centralising its activities by encouraging too many people to get into the Samaja building to perform wedding ceremonies in a mechanical way and in a few hours, time. What I feel is that at least fifty percent of the applications for the building should be rejected every year and that they be sternly told to perform weddings at their own houses in the traditional manner and with night long proceedings. Otherwise, the Samaja, instead of fostering culture, would itself become an institution to completely destroy all that little that is left.

"It would be nice if the Samaja restricts its aid and activity only to the needy.....but if everyone vie with one another to find some hours' time to perform a mechanical wedding in an apologetic manner just for what is called convenience, the Samaja would be held responsible for defacing the beauty of the rituals that are so colourful.. .. Some resistance is

needed here to see that the Samaja does not become a commercial organization..... This should not go too far.. .. with a tendency to turn culture into too near what may be called just a hoax. ”

Thus I tried to voice my feelings from a distant place. Coorg, after all, need not have had any Kodava Samaja, and that was what I had written long back in 1943 in my small book, 'Kodava Samskriti'. Even today, after 28 years, I feel the same, and I write the same. It would be alright if they have such institutions outside Coorg, but why inside? That makes them strangers to each other inside their own home.

To build a way of life the ancestors struggled for generations but, to desecrate those colourful rituals and manners, the modern man, obsessed with the modern superfluity, takes just a few years or days. The fun of the whole thing is that people are misguided from time to time by their own men who speak through their heads and write things without themselves being sure of what they are writing. In another letter of the 16th April 1969, I pleaded with the Samaja on the same subject, and said that :

“..... As to the weddings, I think that the Samaja is doing a dis-service to the community by trying to monopolise the private rituals and conducting them in a slipshod manner in public places. The Kodavas should be left to themselves. They would hang on to their age old customs if no extraneous agencies interfere with them. Why encourage the otherwise well-disciplined community to go to the roadside buildings to conduct the sacred ceremonies ?.....Samaja should

be a place for meetings and discussions, and the building should not be turned into a hotel with hotel managers licensing the building for the bridal parties.....If the Samaja centralises all private rituals, why not bring dead bodies also from their homes and take charge of performing all rituals in that connection ?.... ”.

The most important of all the letters was the one that I wrote on the 24th January 1970 I sent the copies of that letter to some other ‘leaders’ as well. They acknowledged receipt of the same and then expressed their ‘shock’ after going through that. The letter was five foolscap-page long and addressed to the President, Mercara Kodava Samaja. Here I give a few important points from out of that letter :

... In Coorg there are about 10,000 well-to-do people among the Kodavas and another about 5000 outside Coorg The future of the community rests in the hands of these 15,000 people . So these are to be reached. The Mercara Samaja should function at the central Samaja, and as the headquarters of the Kodava interests all over. This Samaja should be broad-based with some more young men and young women, preferably those who are in their twenties, drawn to the central Committee. At each of those city Samajas elsewhere, one local man should be appointed with the payment of some liberal allowance and they should work out the directives passed on by the central Samaja, distribute or circulate bulletins, directives and any other important papers concerning the community.....

“Unless this sort of contact is not worked out

and maintained, and unless efforts are not made to reach this widely scattered community, it would further disintegrate with the demoralised rich men leading the parade of bastards in those cities. The local Kodava Samaja would just be a centre of home politics of a very few people who would be just running the business of renting out the building for the weddings....."

The help that is now being rendered to the Kodava children for their education could now be minimised with the approval of the donors. The condition today is much different from what it was 100 years back when the Fund was started, or 50 years back or even 25 years back. With 46 High Schools, two colleges and a couple of technical institutions, Education in Coorg is within the reach of everyone. What is now required is to save the community from disintegration, or, otherwise, with so much money for education, there would be no community with that name to whom the Fund could be utilised.....

"I am glad to note from your letter that many agree with me on the subject of this 'art of naming'.It is just a mad fancy of such parents who name their children with odd words, and wiser counsel should prevail on them, and the Samaja should infuse that spirit on them. A few boys with names like Santosh, Shekar and so on to whom you have sanctioned aid as a special case, should have been first asked to apply in their Kodava names and then assured them of the aid. There is nothing in the way of those boys and girls to get their names changed even if they are

in their schools now. This mad fancy of going astray should be now checked before it is too late. This message should also go to those who are outside Coorg..... Ignoring such small things would end in disastrous results.....

"In the same vein, I wish to request those Kodava women and girls, wherever they are and in whichever part of the world, adhere to their own pattern of dress, especially sarees. If this aspect of culture is also strictly imposed by one and all, there is no reason why they should go the other way.

"These kinds of wrongs were first committed by the rich people or those of the rich families, and now there are so many rich fellows to flout these traditional values and allow their children to go astray.....

"Sometime back I heard that many voices of protest were made to the Mysore Tourist Department for having advertised the Kodava dress as one of the tourist attractions...That on the whole showed an inferiority complex of a declining and waning raceYes, if it was not for the British statesmen of the last century, not only the Kodavas, the whole of the Hindu culture would have vanished, and this observation of mine is being disputed by some ill-informed men of our country.....but I would not be swayed away by the upsurge of a crowd as damned politicians would generally do.

"If those about 20,000 Kodava women and girls of the cities outside Coorg go about in their own costume what a lovely impression and prestige that would bring to the entire community? Now who is

to ask them to do that? The Kodava Samaja should shed its insincere complex and shyness and come out openly. Cultural work is not a communal work, nor ignoring cultural values does not mean that one is broad-minded. It would just be a shallow mind. The Samaja should not have a false concept of its own existence. The number of the Samaja weddings should be cut down and there should be an end to the weddings with just Dampathi Mhurtham. These bogus dealings should stop.....

“The slow death of a community this way is very irksome to see. Either it should suddenly plunge to its death or efforts be made to restore its full vigour. I don't see any fun in collecting money in the name of Education. Educating whom? Where will those educated fellows go? How far they would be loyal to the society and community that fed them with their ill-conceived notions? These days the so-called education is enough and shortly it would become the concern of the Government to educate everyone, but the cultural ethics, if allowed to disappear, and once it is gone out of trace, it could never be recovered, restored or replaced.

“Some half-baked and quarter educated people think that the world is running fast. Yes, but it is only in respect of the amazing speed of the development of the modern scientific inventions which are no doubt fantastic. That apart, in the ethical sense of the term, man is drifting backward.

“Therefore, I suggest that the waning aspect of this small community must be halted or checked.

Strict disciplinary measures should be undertaken to enforce some essential values. The pattern of Kodava names and the women's costume should be retained at any cost, and this message should go to all those who stay outside Coorg as well. The Kodava costume should not be allowed to become a museum piece or of entertainment value only as used in some All India Women's dress contest. In fact, it is the women who should be the torch-bearers of culture. Our girls should parade with the Coorg costume in the crowded streets of the outside cities, but if they feel shy of their own values then it is the doom of a race or of a community.

In fact, dress, dance and other artistic symbols are true characters of culture of any community, but if we discard them because of our own arrogance and cynicism, then, of course, the alternative is to become a swarm of ants or a flock of sheep as in communist countries with no individual or national character of any kind.

“Too much of gathering money with no ethical purpose or traditional values in view, and allowing these values to fritter away before their own eyes and with no regard to safeguard them would be, perhaps, like the abhorrent pride of fallen women. The planters might give money to build funds but with no idea in view as to what for they are doing that. This kind of hoarding money is just a collective greed taking place of individual greed.

“Therefore what? Who is to work on all this? Everyone is dictating terms from far off places, No

one wants to come forward to work. This might be the general grouse of those who sit in chairs but don't work. But I may say that this fear is unfounded. The elderly men should make place for the young and assume the role of advisers. Here I don't mean any disrespect to older men, but the younger men and women would do better if given opportunities.

"The main thing is to concentrate efforts to round up the scattered men and women and impose strict codes of discipline on them. To do this many more young and educated men and women should be roped in to the central Committee. Those who refuse to heed to the discipline should be publicly denounced. We need not be afraid of their going away from the fold. - Once denounced by the society, their next place would be hell. Their money itself would be a poison to them. In that way a pure race of some thousands would suffice to bring credit to the community instead of lakhs and lakhs who roam about as"

"Trust the younger ones. Give them directives, and give them the responsibilities. They would be the best disciplinarians. Do not allow the younger boys and girls to rot in frustration. Trust them and allow them to do. They would do things much better.

"The younger once get frustrated and turn cynics and violate social codes when the elders try to push them aside. The elders of over 65 should retire gracefully instead of going about in search of activities in which they are not interested. As it is, the

elders have bungled enough. They can take up to travelling around the country and see those beautiful temples and places of tourist interest in their old age. Let them not interfere in cultural activities, especially those who had violated the traditional ways. They have to retire from such work with grace and dignity.

"The Samaja should have half-a-dozen young and enterprising women in the committee-to direct their sisters. The women need not listen to men these days. They respect the advice coming from the persons of their own sex as they know that men have failed to inspire them. Therefore, young women still in their twenties, should be got into active work. You will see ; they will work wonders".

This was a long and outspoken letter, and many of them read that. The older men must have thought that they had been abused or belittled. On the 22nd March 1970, during the meeting of the Samaja, they seemed to have brought the above points for consideration but I failed to know to what extent things were gone through. On the 6th September, I sent an article to the President of the Kodava Samaja requesting them to collect every piece of record and valuable books so far published about the Kodavas and preserve them carefully in the Samaja building. . They appreciated the idea, and the President Pandanda Chengappa wrote acknowledging receipt of that. On the 3rd October 1970, I wrote to him on some points that I had touched earlier in the above letter, and said, that :

.....Let me request you again to consider my earlier letter. Help to educate the Kodava children is enough. The general funds should be used to tie down and bring the Kodava race together and thus give it a new orientation.....There is no charm in all that sort of education which everyone is getting today. Most of the money you collected up to seven lakhs of rupees is not from the educated ones. It is from those half and quarter educated rich people and planters and you can see the list for yourself. Those who are well-educated have gone in their own way, but, of course, there are some exceptions to what I say.

“.....The younger men and women are as much interested as any of us if we are prepared to handover responsibilities to them. But those dishonest and insincere office-bearers should be kicked out every year, and no opportunist should find a place.

“I don't feel anything to be proud of the Samaja. Although one might like to get away by performing a cheap wedding in the way the Samaja is now doing purely on commercial basis, most of the people with whom I have talked hate that such a thing should take place in the centre of the town.....What then is the fate of the family houses and at least to some aspects of elaborate rituals and customs? Why do you elders deliberately try to kill traditions—and why some of them only think of the ways to collect easy money for the Samaja not minding the fact that they should preserve culture and not destroy it?.....

“All these changes, bogus weddings, bringing

parties and dubbing them in different rooms and celebrating street weddings, were done during these ten years despite the fact some 'Acharyas' pose as though they are ardent Samaja workers. I find it difficult to believe their intentions. Some of them want to be everywhere in every kind of organization just to show up. They don't mind killing the hen that laid golden eggs as long as their purpose is served....."

"In order to increase the fund by any crude means, you have collected money even from those men who have played the role of traitors in the past. If I had been in your position, I would'nt have accepted that Rs. 5000 or Rs. 10,000 from such renegades. If you condone treachery and hypocrisy and gather money like that how can you discipline the society or even the younger men?—Let me repeat, that a well-bred race of some thousands would be more than enough instead of lakhs who roam about as Bs. (Here 'B' refers to four sorts of people whose names of profession begins with 'B' and those include, apart from bastards, those who simply live by bluffing, bragging and bribing.)"

74. THE SO-CALLED KODAGU COMPANY

This is a company, I think, founded in the year 1920-21, with the shares collected from both the Kodavas and the non-Kodavas. That was a substantial project in those days and that was certainly a great instrument of people's voice. With non-Kodava share-holders non-

Kodava subscribers to the paper and the non-Kodava contribution of a building to house the press etc, the Company was started with high expectations. In the first 25 years, the Kodagu Weekly served as a source of people's voice concerning Coorg politics but in the later 25 years till 1971, it ceased to be so powerful and its quality also fell, but, nevertheless, the Kodavas continued to patronise that because that was the only paper through which they could get some news of the district.

Apart from those original shareholders of the Company, most of whom have died long back, I do not know if any effort was made to supply that with fresh oxygen to retain its life as a thriving Company. The Kodagu Weekly continued with the money earned by the printing press, job work and the subscriptions paid to the paper, and among those subscribers, at least 85 per cent of them, were the Kodavas. How many non-Kodava readers are there the people do not know but it appears that the shareholders of the Company know that through their annual audit reports. In the days when the paper was voicing its editor's opinion on keeping Coorg separate as a province, the Kodavas gave their moral support to him and to the paper but the non-Kodavas turned against that because they did not subscribe to the views that the paper voiced.

All that was understandable. However, now it is doubtful if anyone knows what is happening inside that Company because they say that the shareholders of the Company alone are informed of inner things and that others have no business. That was the way how they put it.

The Kodavas both in and outside Coorg get the Kodagu Weekly, which has a good number of subscribers among

them, and, therefore, I began to cast my eyes on the working of that paper, and I was worried only in respect of the editorial and news coverage aspect of that paper and nothing else. In those days, the ex-Editor was too much involved in his political work, and, the sub-Editor to whom he entrusted the responsibility was totally dishonest and discriminative in his work. Not only have I been hearing about this through others, but I could also see for myself in my own case. The readers would refer to the pages 125 to 134, 142 to 160, 278 etc of this book where I have referred to the inefficient and dishonest work of this man, the sub-Editor, and, later the Editor. I could find all that because I was interested to watch how I was looked upon by one who lacked diligence and decency. Whenever there were news items where my name was also included that man would delete the entire piece of news from reporting. In that way, he would behave as though he suffered from acute headache when-ever he thought about me because I knew him well than anyone else there.

. Anyway when many others made similar complaints against that paper which indulged in damaging others' names, I brought that to the notice of the people concerned and told them that kind of sneaky and stealthy way of conducting a paper should stop. But that man knew that the most of the readers of that small paper were just passive and good-for-nothing people and they would hardly find out all that I ventured to say here. However, from about 1960, I would not sleep and began to openly warn him about the treachery that he was practising inside the cellar, and, while doing so, I would refer to his way of

getting up of the paper or some books, that came out in his name.

But the fellow had one consolation, and that was that I was not there. I was in some far away place and so he wrote as to what business after all to a man who was somewhere away. The pity was that the so called Company was itself a hoax and the directors themselves were in disarray and they were least interested of any thing of that Company which always said that it was working on a loss. Anyway, on the 24th January 1970, I wrote, and when I wrote to them, I did not mince words. I sent the copy of my letter to some others as well. I said, that :

“ To serve this widely scattered community, the Kodagu Weekly should be reorganised.... A good number of Kodavas who are outside Coorg read this paper, and they do it for sentimental reasons, and, in fact those who reside outside Coorg are more genuine in their love to their land than those who are inside. This Weekly paper, therefore, should at least reach the hands of 10,000 Kodavas, and towards that end the accredited agents should work. As it is, this paper of two small sheets contains nothing and it is working almost in a rut. It is not worth that Rs. 10 which is its annual subscription, and with about Rs. 30,000 annually from about 3000 subscribers, that paper is still an object of inferior quality

“ The directorial body of that Kodagu Company should be broadbased, and this ‘paper’ should be made to come out of its cellar and shed its obnoxious role. An educated nationalist imbued with some honesty and originality, should be appointed as editor. The

present incumbent who is a shadow of the past prejudices and inefficiency, should be replaced in order to cleanse the rut and to give a new vigour which the present situation badly needs.

“ If what I say is interpreted as drastic and blunt, I am afraid, this small Weekly paper would continue to be as deceitful as it was ... If the number of subscribers should increase, it should be only on account of the Kodavas who are both inside and outside Coorg, and if those Kodavas should get it, the quality and the editorial drab of that paper should change. The Kodagu Company should cease to be an artificial Company and should now come out to serve the people who want to patronise it for the sake of the community.”

I wrote to the Chairman of the Board of directors of that Company a similar letter to which he replied on the 2nd February 1970, but his reply was not at all satisfactory. In another letter to him, I made myself clear as to why I insisted on a change, but then he wrote to me on the 9th May 1970, that :

“I would call on you to take over the editorship and your contribution will be a boon to the reading public of Coorg. We propose to have the Golden Jubilee of the paper in June 1971, which period will be auspicious for you to take over, and you will be doing a signal service to the Kannada Weekly which took its birth in June 1921. I hope you will think of this suggestion with due consideration and inform me if you are in favour of such a move..... ”.

That was well-written, but I was not 'in favour of such a move'. I thanked him for the offer and hoped that it was not a retort to me for my complaints. I wrote that we could get a talented editor of some honesty and integrity and that I would guide him wherever I may be. I also stressed that for such jobs one should not be picked up from the streets, because it is a question of educating and imparting things to some thousands, and that one should look at the job with some sanctity and not deceive or exploit others by sneaky and treacherous writings. A fifty-year old paper could have been the foremost one in Karnataka, but this 'Kodagu' today 'is not as good as it was when it was started in 1921. You can see it for yourself', I said, and added that 'with Coorg gone-at least the community should be saved'.

Thus I wrote, and when the issues were of public interest, however, I would knock the doors of any man irrespective of other considerations. But the trouble with those people was that they would always end up things by attributing motives for suggestions made. One man wrote to me even about the salary paid to the editor thinking that I was interested in the job. To such people who wrote such uncalled for things, I did not want to say about my spurning away those many remunerative chances that came in my way as I would not accept jobs that were beyond my taste or interest. Such episodes began even long back in 1943 when that old veteran administrator Dewan Bahadur Chengappa. insisted on my taking up a job in the revenue department, from which base, he assured that he would lift me up. Really, if I had wanted to, I would have been somewhere in that line amidst those wolves and jackals;

but all the time, I wanted to be myself and not a shadow of others.

Once in 1945, I was offered a certain part-time job in addition to my regular work, but that was given to me after deciding to lay out the other man who was there. I did not want to accept a job after depriving my colleague, and, therefore, I said that I would take it only after the other man vacated himself willingly. Those who knew this incident appreciated me for that, and later I too thought that it was the right way.

Although I had been there for over twelve years as a teacher, never did I offer myself to give private tuition to anyone despite the requests of many parents to do so. I had never received any sort of private tuition when I was a student neither did I like that useless practice going on that way. However, once I was forced to give tuition to a second year University student who was the son of a top officer. I agreed to do that as an exceptional case. The boy passed brilliantly in that subject after that, and his father came forward to offer me a big amount as a 'reward', but, I simply thanked him and refused to accept that 'reward'.

So that was me. Even from my book- 'A Tiny Model State of South india' alone I have lost nearly Rs. 2000 in those days because many of the people who took the copies from me failed to pay the cost of the same, and later on, a good many of them kept on hiding from me, nor did I care to remind them hoping that they would pay one day or the other, but till now they did'nt (Page 412). Anyway, I did'nt show myself as worried thereby.

On the whole, as far as jobs were concerned, there

were opportunities for me in plenty, but they were not the type that I loved. However, when those silly fellows like Chandu, wrote to me about the salary of a petty newspaper man assuming that I would be interested in the job, I felt, that they were mocking at themselves, although I made it clear that such jobs would be a labour of love for me. As to the non-Kodava share-holders and the non-Kodava subscribers to the Kodagu Weekly, I wrote that it was no use sacrificing the interests of some thousands of Kodavas who are the readers of that paper by retaining a few others in the list of subscribers. I said that the Kodavas now need a new orientation through a good newspaper of their own and that the Kodagu Weekly should fill up that void :

* Moreover, there is no charm in that old out-moded set-up. I see the Kodavas living in a rut. With about 130,000 Malayalees and Mapillas and another 130,000 Kannada and Tamil speaking people, these few thousands of Kodavas are simply hoodwinking others of their importance”.

That was how I wrote. When I was informed that the Kodagu Company was working on a loss, I would not easily digest that stupid statement because a fifty-year old paper and the press with steady job-work to give an excuse of working with no profit, was another fraud story. Even there I had to be harsh in regard to the editor of that paper who must have been not straight. In my letter of the 24th October 1970, I explained at length how the people with duplicate and triplicate receipt books could cheat the organizations for which they work, and then added that :

"The Kodagu Company too might be having such mysterious ways of keeping accounts. Of course, there is annual auditing. The Auditor audits the books that are placed before him and eats everything that is supplied to him by the one who gets audited. The cooperative societies too have such auditing. All such bodies might maintain accounts well and the auditors might certify them as good. Some societies get caught occasionally only by their too greedy methods to swindle left and right, and by their failure to treat that 'hungry' auditor with some hot coffee at least. Anyway, it is obvious that the Kodagu Company is having its own method to keep accounts. Otherwise, through which hole the money goes?....."

I did not stop at that. I said that the editor *Cum* manager of the Company, who has been there for too long to get proficient inside that cellar to maintain such account be allowed to go home, and then suggested a name of a certain young man of Nalknad, an advocate, be appointed on a part-time basis for the same salary. Later I sent articles addressed exclusively to the Kodavas but the editor wrote to me on the 16th December 1970 that the Kodagu "is a nationalistic paper run by a public Company" and that they had to "accommodate other communities as well". But then I informed him that holding such contentions are sheer deceptive, and to call that petty paper a national one was just humbug. I explained what I had meant by that and said, in my letter of the 8th January 1971, that :

"It is no use pretending that a small paper like

that is to serve every community. That which poses to serve everyone serves no oneHowever, this way of debunking people all the time should not go too far along with the fanfare of the Golden Jubilee and things like that. Those subscribers to the paper—the Kodavas—need something substantial and not this kind of cooked up stuff stealthily produced.....You better get out, because, I know, that you cannot do anything better.....”.

75. THEY HAD NO TRUE STORY TO SAY

For the last fifteen years, I went to Coorg four or five times, and some on very brief visits. Among the few books that I wrote, the translation of Appacha Kavi's works was the one, and that was released for sale by the Kannada Sahitya Parishat at Bangalore in November 1963. During this time, my history of Karnataka was serialised in one or two Kannada Weeklies of Bangalore and Hubli, and one of them continued the series for four long years till 1966. I wrote also a good many articles both in English and Kannada, and on the occasion of the Princess Gowramma's 100th death anniversary in 1964, I wrote a commemorative article and that was published in the Statesman and Modern Review of Calcutta, Indian Express of Bombay, Indian Review and the Tamil Journal Manjari, of Madras and Sharana Sahitya, Samyukta Karnataka and Mysindia of Bangalore.

In the meantime my research work on the history of Coorg and of Karnataka was amply rewarded when I succeeded in getting more and more information from

various sources.¹ One of my recent works has attracted attention of the scholars of Karnataka and that has been the cause of wild and crude comments of the surprised cynics. Anyway that book is not concerned to Coorg, and, therefore, I would not mention about that here.

In September 1968, I went home purely on a private work and entirely of personal nature. In fact, it was a sentimental journey to me, and, for the one who is homeless the whole country becomes a sweet home but even that vast home itself is fast becoming an uncomfortable dwelling place for me. It was in 1965, two or three of us called on a man in Coorg, when, to my utter disgust, that man whom we visited, just managed us by his dry gossips, speaking all the time in English. His wife was exhibiting her bare back with her non-Kodava styled saree and with her lips painted red with lip stick and that seemed awfully red as that of a mouth of a corpse. Although myself and another man were rare visitors, nothing came in the form of refreshment, not even a cup of water. After blandly sitting for nearly an hour we politely walked out.

Such scenes are disgustingly unhealthy. People of this sort contribute much to the social frustration. The basic defect in that man was that he was too rich and he amassed his wealth by as many crude means as one could practice. Of course, there may be many others like him and he could conveniently remain satisfied by the fact that he is one in the company of many upstarts.

But during my next visit to Coorg in 1968, I would not do such mistakes. I reached Bangalore on the 20th September, and after having gone there, I felt like doing

some speech making, and that was the time when they had taken to arrange for the Appacha Kavi birthday centenary. So I wrote to the concerned people that I would be there on the 24th of that month. I went straight to Virarajpet where my mother was (then staying and then turned towards Pollibetta. With Biddanda Poovayya and Michael Garman, who was my colleague in London, and who was in Coorg at that time, I went round some places singing. We began the programme at Parane and from there roamed about the Coorg towns up to Ponnampet and then wound up the tour in Mercara.

This was an occasion of supreme relaxation to me because I had never had a chance like that for years to express myself freely and to sing to my heart's content. For me personally it was a pleasure to address the students of Coorg. I tried to shrewdly avoid people and those mosquitoes of the streets, and all that was a great relief to me. I saw some changes in Coorg over the years. Many high school buildings, one more college building, a few hospital constructions, and especially the one of Ammathi, an industrial plant at Gonikoppa, a technical institute at Kushalnagar, and some artless and colourless buildings in some other towns. Electricity has penetrated into mofussil areas. The richer ones were bloating with their riches and the economic condition of the common man is greatly improved, but many among the Kodavas were looking at Mysore and Bangalore for their salvation.

My last programme was at Kodava Samaja, Mercara, and that was my third day in Coorg. I left for Bangalore the next day and reached London on the 30th September and back in Canada on the 3rd October 1968. That was

just a trip that took only twelve days and that was worth it.

The Kavi's centenary celebrations were held on the 1st December 1968, and according to the reports I received, it was a grand success. I received five or six letters and two or three of them gave a detailed account of the function. I was naturally pleased, but some 'friends' gave me all the news but carefully avoided those facts concerning me, and so did the treacherous Kodagu Weekly. Well, that was alright.

An important programme of work regarding the Kavi was the reprinting of his books. I had told them to let me know in the event of their taking up that work, but they did'nt care a hoot for all that. Two or three older men were good in collecting money and beyond that they did'nt know anything else but entrusted the job to the two printing presses and those men deliberately ignored me and my suggestions, especially on printing those songs in the modern style, to include the Kavi's autobiography etc. etc.

Even to print that they had a committee, it seems, and that was to cheat me. That Committee was just a hoax and their project was a sham. That was why they were hiding from me and did the work in a hurry and in secrecy, and that was why they were moaning as to why I should trouble those crooks from this distance. Yes, I got it.

They informed me that they would print the same way as found in the previous editions, and they did exactly that. The last page number of the reprinted book is 89, although it is a work of more than 400 pages. Thus they blindly transcribed the stuff from the old paper to the new:

They wantonly ignored all my suggestions even without correcting the printing mistakes left out in the previous editions. They would not realise that those who betray spite and malice that way need not have any sense of shame or conscience, and those printers of that book joined by a few old fogies did all this with a sort of deliberate arrogance, and with public money in hand.

It didn't end there. They made that same man whom I was criticising for his literary fraud to write an introduction to that reprinted work and that was another mockery. That seemed to have been a mischief of those crooks aimed at me. However, the fellow took the earliest opportunity to tell some more blatant lies because he thought that that was the only chance for him to play fool among the fools. He had got himself written elsewhere that he joined the press as a worker in 1942, but later he forgot that and wrote that he was there in 1940, and that he went to the Kavi for an article, when in fact, the Kavi sent that particular article to the press three years later in December 1943. However, this liar on whom a lawyer notice was served for his 'mischievous' writings (Pages 138 to 143), had never known nor even heard of that Kavi till then and yet he deceived the whole lot of the readers with such hypocritical writings. But then who are the men who asked him to write that way? Well, they were the "hawks of same feathers" doing a sort of business with this kind of 'social' work. Another joke was that Guggu who had been, due to his own ulcers, denouncing the Kavi, suddenly thought that it was better to praise him now and he too joined the rest of the bluffers to tell some more mock-tales of his own.

The truth is, in fact, these people never tell the same story in the same way because they have no honest story at all to tell. I do not know the role that Kodira Uthappa (Page 241) played here. This Uthappa seemed as though a life-President of the Kodava Education fund. He knew what I was writing, and a couple of times I had sent him the copies of the letters written to the Samaja. Still he did not seem to have taken to his role seriously. He knew, and even agreed with my views, and he also knew to disregard all that in order to please his friends who were a bunch of opportunists. In the list of those school students to whom they distributed aid from the Fund, for the year 1971, one could again see the names of the Kodava boys, like Udaya, Sagar, Amrit, Partha, Prasad, Ravindra and so on.

Kodira Uthappa, the *Achaarya* of the Fund, might tell us that times have changed. That was the way all those people who desecrated and destroyed Indian culture and civilization in the past, have been saying, and that was the way they escaped from being damned. Therefore, one cannot expect much from people like Uthappa and his coteries who try to keep busy with some activities like this.

I feel, however, that Kodira Uthappa has given me an opportunity to speak about him. It was he who made me write this. As I wrote at Page 348 of this book, I had sent a petition to the Chief Commissioner to introduce the Kodava dances like *Bolakaat* and other temple dances as a subject to be taught scientifically during the physical education classes at the schools where the Kodava children are more, and in South Coorg. The chief.

commissioner had given his moral support to the scheme, and the then Education Officer too had recommended the plan strongly, but when the paper was sent to the assistant commissioner for his views, this same Uthappa sabotaged the whole idea saying that such a thing would be sectional and that would not meet the needs of all the communities and so on.

But he should not pretend that I was not able to read his motives. He wanted to show to the Chief Commissioner that how discreet an officer he was, and thus obtain some favours, extension in service etc. But let him, or others, know that that scheme would not have been sectional for it was not intended for all the schools. Those dances are an art, a kind of yogic exercises which are well worth popularising among every one and every community. The Goorg schools of the 1930s had them in their curriculum but they had stopped it later on, maybe, due to some week-kneed people like Uthappa whose knees were not strong enough to stand the strain of such beautiful and rhythmic dances.

Kodira Uthappa's associate was Kotera Chinnappa. Their combination and activities in the Samaja seemed to have been somehow opportunistic, and it need not be any thing else after going through the things that were told about them in this book. This Chinnappa (Pages 169-176) wrote articles that culture did not mean trying to maintain traditional costumes, the pattern of names etc. Chinnappa's ideas, of course, were sheer nonsense, because his education was poor. He knew the trick of making money for himself and collecting money for the Samaja and nothing else. When I referred to his dangerous way of writing to

mislead people, his friend Kodira Uthappa, would not like anyone saying that. Their friendship, comradeship and relationship were so strong that they didn't care for anything. These were the men going about in the Samaja and the Education Fund and putting up a show as all-knowing people. They, like most other killers of traditional values and culture of the past, say that 'times have changed' and that was the way how they could get on as social figures without working on retaining some essential features of culture and the way of life. My views are very hard for them to swallow and my writings are very bitter for them to digest. They need liars like Gupta and Guggu to distort things and produce fake and fraud on the paper.

The Carlton Publishers in New York had agreed in 1968 to publish my book on Gen. Thimmayya, but I hesitated to give them thinking that these Americans have already published one book on him, and, therefore, I thought that another one could be brought out from Thimmayya's home district and by those who had known him well. I also thought that it would not be a big thing for three or four rich men to get a couple of thousands of copies of the book printed, and I know by experience that the copies would be sold out soon.

Thus I built a sort of castle in the air and then sent the typescript of the book—not to New York but to Coorg, requesting the three millionaires—all Kodavas—to bring the book out, and for the purpose, I arranged a good printer of India, to undertake the responsibility of bringing out and marketing the book to which he had agreed, and he waited with the manuscript

copy for the green signal from them to commence the printing work. As to myself, of course, I made it quite clear that I was not interested in the sales proceeds of the copies of the book and then left everything to them to deal as they considered fit.

All that was well done, and they wrote to me nice letters. They showed also great interest in the project and two of them promised their support. It appeared that they discussed on the feasibility of publishing the book through the Samaja but the response to the suggestion of those who were there, it was reported, was cool and even ice—cold. However, for a long time nothing happened, and, in fact, none of them did anything about that. It was good that they didn't do anything, on the whole!

76. THERE ARE SOME WRITERS ON COORG.

In the last century the European writers wrote about Coorg, and they were pioneer writers and explorers. They took to the magnificent job in those days on behalf of the Government of the time, who patronised them in their task. I have written about these people in greater detail elsewhere.

Among the non-Kodava writers on Coorg there were two or three and they were merely professionals. They wrote on Coorg as I wrote on Ethiopia. This sort of writing does not mean anything and there was no love involved in the subject of their study although they might collect facts and chronicle them faithfully. Such works are just the academic products based on the works on the earlier pioneer writers.

D.N. Krishnayya was a local non-Kodava writer, who did try to dig out facts. He wrote many articles and a few booklets. Most of the stuff he took from the works of the earlier writers, and he implicitly put his faith on such works like 'Rajendraname' which is not at all that reliable because it was the 'story' of the Raja who got it written for his own political purposes. Krishnayya also blindly agreed with what the earlier writers said on the Kodavas and Coorg. I have some regard for his perseverance but I may say that he failed to disprove the distorted facts. But he did keep on bringing together the scattered material in the form of articles.

Now coming to the author of the 'Pattole Palame', I have my own reservations. Not only there are reasons to believe, but also I have heard, that Nadikerianda Chinnappa, compiled his useful book after being told and directed by the European officers like Hilton Brown and others who were in Coorg around 1920. His successful translation of the Gita in the form of Coorg ballads called *Bhagavanthanda Paat* gives an impression of his being a compulsive writer like Perianda Chengappa who wrote his *Aandolath Paat*.

What after all makes a successful writer is the love in the subject that one deals with, and that *Love* should be an essential requisite for any honest chronicler. That was how the great writers are made. Intellectual honesty and dedicated perseverance to unravell the subject matter are the qualities that any average writer should reveal to his reader, but, on the other hand, I have a couple of instances to prove to the contrary although those are not

isolated cases in our vast country.

Among the writers of the recent times I must mention here of one B D. Ganapathy. I do not know what the letter 'B' stood for, because he never made mention of that anywhere. But I presume he is a Kodava and of Kiggatnad. A worker in the printing press too could write and that was what he did. I could not find in him a grain of talent, a sense of decency, honesty or intellectual equipment for being a writer of a journal or of a book. In my letters to the Kodava Samaja and later to the Kodagu Company, I had to regretfully speak against this man, and most of what I said could be found in many pages of this book. That was unavoidable in a book like this and let not the readers think that I was trying to belittle others. Moreover, if I don't expose now such open hypocrisy and mass deception of that magnitude it would be too late to do so after some time.

Blackmailing others, hiding news reports about others, writing sneakily and stealthily with several pseudonyms in order to mislead people, tampering others' writings in the name of editing a paper, changing the names of the contributors of the articles to mislead people or to malign the writers, trying to misrepresent facts in order to discredit others and such one-hundred things he kept on doing from inside his cellar and for a long time, and that same thing he did as a writer of books too. How could the poor people of Coorg, and last of all, the poor Kodavas, though they are rich in money, understand all these things? Anyway I brag that I understood all that and, therefore, I did not hesitate to speak out about him. I would not shed crocodile tears for him. He was

in fact picked out for the job from the streets long back, and that was the main reason for his having had indulged in such things. During those times, when that petty newspaper wanted a good writer, they could only get a wrong man like this and that was all the quality that was left there. Therefore I wrote to replace him "in order to cleanse the rut", and the readers should not misunderstand me. It is better that they read what he wrote and all that I wrote here in this book before cursing me for saying these things. They should not think that I wrote things out of spite. Never did I betray such a thing as malice nor am I capable of doing that. What I am doing here is just speak out things which are as clear as daylight for all to see. That man terribly exploited the ignorance of the people to the extent of deceiving the whole lot of them. Of course, I have done my best to expose him here and it was he who invited me to do that and I did not do it on my own accord, and for that he should thank himself.

There are some things quite indecent about this man. Let me cite one simple instance for that. On the 7th November 1967, I wrote to him to send me a copy of his very distortious writing called 'Kodavas'. I enclosed a cheque also towards its cost etc. He kept quiet. A month later, I sent a reminder. His silence prevailed. Later in March 1968, he published an article of mine (Vide pages 144 to 160), and it was here the man was caught by me for the one-hundredth time. As he did not send me his book, I thought that there was something fishy about this book which was patronised by men like Kodira Uthappa, Pandikuthira Chengappa and others,

perhaps, they were delighted to see those fake colour pictures he put in that book. Anyway, I wrote to an advocate in Mercara to shake him up and admonish him to send me a copy, and that the advocate did. After all this happened, the man wrote to me, on the 5th April 1968 that :

" I was given to understand by Mr....(advocate) that you need a copy of my recent book. (Here he ignored all my letters) It was a surprise to me to know that you are in Canada. (This is a laboured surprise). When did you go there ? (He makes me understand that he had never received any of my letters). Where is your family ? "

This man too, like Guggu, Boggu, Daggu and others, is worried about my family. Who is this man after all ? I had never taken him into any account at any time, except that he was a producer of some yellow stuff through his writings, and yet one should look to his interest in me, and in my family too. People like these will have a happy day when they see others' families in disarray after, perhaps, themselves bringing differences between peoples and their families. In fact, with Guggu, Boggu and such people, it was a regular occupation. However, this man, without bothering to reply my letters and sending me the book for the money I sent him, he was trying to be evasive. He continued to say in the above letter, that :

" Surely you are an adventurous type. (This appears to be a certificate to me, but it is nonsense)....

You have received the request for the article. Hope you will kindly do the needful. (Means-I send him the article that was already before him when he wrote this letter).

This 'request' for an article on some particular subject did not come from him. Someone else, by mistake, wrote to me to send an article. Anyway, when this man wrote to me to send the article, that same article was right in front of him.

However, within a few days, on the 27th May 1968, I got his book from another source. After a quick glance over the pages, I air-mailed it back the very next day lest the sender of the book might miss that precious 'wedding gift'. After seeing that dangerously misleading work, I thought of writing all that what I wrote in the first 150 pages of this book. With that I was only trying to put things in a true perspective lest the younger and future generations are not misled by this kind of products in thick paper and big founts that are used to increase the bulk of the book along with fake pictures, and perverse statements made unashamedly and spitefully. Less I say about that the better because the readers themselves could see the rest of the things.

I think that for much of this kind of fraud that this man was sneakily producing, one has to blame Pandianda Belliappa (page 160) and his lack of supervision over his work in those days. Lately, of course, some old fogies took the things that this man bluffed as far granted and thus a totally dubious practice came to prevail. No one cared to know anything of anyone, and this man of the

Kodagu Company saw—that was the way to get on with his writings and earnings. My warnings to him, both directly and indirectly, did not have any effect on him because he knew that I was crying in wilderness, and from somewhere.

After all one should realise that "the pressits ministry is for good or for evil, depends upon the character of those who direct it. The press is a mill which grinds all that is put into the hopper, and, with poisoned grain it will grind its meal, but there will be death in the bread."

I had not at all asked myself so far as to why after all people write books because I was all along under the impression that writing was an art and also a talent that was given only to a few. But when I saw one like Kotera Muthanna writing a book, I felt myself too small and useless even as a third-rate writer. This Muthanna, nearly 25 years senior to me, kept on telling others that I was his friend although the 'others' did not know that I had been deliberately trying to avoid him for years. Even then when I came to know about his going about here and there, I had to write to him some strong letters telling him to behave well, but my telling him all that was like pouring water on duck's back—simply a waste of paper, ink and postage.

Kotera Muthanna's book is like that of his brother's. He joined service as a teacher and then retired as a teacher after so many of his juniors superseded him in service. Therefore, he thought of doing something in the evening of his life. To begin with, he wrote some articles in some small newspapers which have a circulation of 100 or 200. Muthanna enjoyed seeing his writing in print. In his late sixties he wrote what I had been writing in my early

twenties, and this is certainly no exaggeration nor self-praise. Readers should bear with me. However, no one took Kotera Muthanna seriously when he took to such doodling but he used to be in many streets to say that he worte many things, he knew music, and so on.

However, Muthanna's sudden emergence as a writer was best exploited by his brother who was in his late seventies because the latter was sure that if he encouraged his brother to write, his name would find a prominent place in such a book as one of the architects of Coorg's downfall. Both these men were staunch supporters of those who did not want Coorg to be a separate province. Both these men also knew that people of Coorg have a very short memory, and, therefore, they could show themselves in a new garb as writers on Coorg. Muthanna must have thought that that would be a way to salvage his demotion in service. He must have also thought that if a man who was not at all in Government service and who lived just by bluffing and bragging, and who was sure of becoming a successful grocer, and towards that end he had even marked out a central place in a town to open his grocery, later by fluke of his queer luck and cruel manouevring, could become an Education Officer within only ten years after that, why not he (Kotera Muthanna) become an author of a book if not anything else ?

So this Muthanna got busy to write in his 72nd year, and with a youthful enthusiasm he called his book, "Jagathigonde Kodagu " When I say that this name is as absurd as his work, I am as level-headed as one could be when writing on such things. I wrote to him to send me a copy of his book and I had a right to get a copy from him free

because I had given him four publications of mine free of cost. But Kotera Muthanna, like the other man, did not send me one, and he too preferred to hide his head from me.

There was a reason for his hiding. He knew that I was his uncomfortable 'friend' and that I would not spare him as I did'nt in the case of the other man. He too did not write or say a single 'story' in the same way. He was going about in the streets, and from house to house, as I once said, with a drum or without a drum. Prying and probing into others' affairs, was his hobby. I wrote to him even about this but all my efforts were utter failure and sheer waste of time and waste of postage. Can't help.

Anyway I managed to get a copy of his book, and according to some friends—that book was not written in good taste. I was too quick to agree with them. He has also bluffed a lot at pages 60, 81, 89, 100, 118, 124, 130, 135, 175 etc. Apart from the numerous printing mistakes on every page and haphazard arrangement of the pages for which he alone was responsible because he was always there at the crowded Avenue Road of Bangalore market, even the dates mentioned at several pages are also wrong though he lived through the history of the times about which he wrote. His deliberate false statements could be found at pages 70, 74, 81, 123, 126, 129, 142, 143, 188 etc. Not only that. His mind too was not stable when he wrote certain obscene things in his 73rd year such as those found at pages 77, 110, 112, 124, 177 etc. That was perhaps a stage of his second childhood when he could not discriminate things that should be written and that should not be written.

At some places his recordings bear the stamp of his malice as well as mischief. In page 216, he referred to my translation of the Kavi's works and even there he mischievously distorted facts and maligned the author. He had with him the translation of the Kaveri Nataka since 1967. He walked all the way to my printer and stealthily passed on a note to be added in the book. This was in 1966, and then in 1969, he wrote all this kind of nonsense saying that that particular book had yet to be translated. This kind of writing things, no doubt, a treachery, and that was what I wrote to him on the 15 th May 1970. I warned him to explain himself lest all this might one day be revealed. But the man had no courage to write to me, and since then I am not aware of his whereabouts.

This Kotera Muthanna went to Gen. Cariappa for a 'foreword' to his book, and, I am sure, poor Gen., Cariappa was certainly shocked when he was encountered with a request like this. One could very well understand that the general was bluffed when he was given "a brief summary in English of what has been written in Kannada", when it was said that the book "gives us a full picture in all aspects concerning Coorg". Let me tell here and now that the general was duped into writing a 'foreword' and that the book has'nt got anything like that. It was some hotch-potch narration of some history and politics of the recent times together with an account of some people including that of his brother, and both the brothers seen photographed with their wives. That, of course, was their new style.

Kotera Muthanna also lied to the general when the

latter said that the author 'had given us in greater detail of happenings between the years 1834 and 1884 than any other writer has done so far'. This is not true because I searched for those "greater details of the happenings" in that book not to find any. I searched for that because I wanted to know if I had omitted any when I had taken to survey the past. Those few so called 'dewans' whom he named were just the Mukteshwars and Shirestedars but in those days people called all headclerks as dewans, and Muthanna too called them as such but that meant nothing. After 1840 there were no dewans, although people thought that they were there in the form of their shadows. His lurking desire was to bring in the name of one of his ancestors, Mandepanda Thimmayya, who was probably- why, certainly- an out-caste in his time. This Thimmayya had held a position in the confidential secretariat, first in the days of the Raja, and later in the British days, and people called him a dewan, and Muthanna was happy that he made a discovery of that. Fortunately, Gen. Gariappa did not say, as he did in the case of the other man, stating that this author too was 'God-sent!.'

I write all this in this vein in order to check the flow of distorted versions at the hands of unscrupulous, deceptive and spiteful writers of this sort. That was all my motive, and, I swear, I keep an open mind in all this. The Kodavas are a small community and they need to be told who amongst who. It is no use ignoring things to the extent of letting such hoax go on as it is. Even in the names I mentioned at pages 190 to 250 and elsewhere of this book, there are traitors and opportunists as there are nationalists and philonthropists. That, of course,

ought to be like that because all sorts need to make the world, but we cannot afford to be ignorant of people who write things in the way they do.

77. SOME LAST-MINUTE REMINISCENCES

I like to make this work as complete as possible, for, after all, I may not indluge in this kind of job again on a border district which is fast becoming a bi-lingual area, and which might one day become a bone of contention between the two linguistic groups. Whatever that may be, when I was trying to do some field work in connection with my book on Coorg in those days, I had inevitably stumbled against many, but I could not, I should admit, get any useful points from anyone because the older men of those days too had already become modernised and they could not truly represent the past.

My father, Madappa, (Vide page 266) had belonged to the older generation. With his fairly good job of Sanitary Inspector in those days, he strutted along the length and breadth of the district, and I remember he had a nice white horse on which he rode. It seemed to me that he did not make use of the opportunities he had. I used to have some serious discussions with him on important subjects. However, his views and outlook were entirely different from that of mine, and that was how the things were. I had brothers too— all very much unlike me and like anyone else in the streets— all school drop-outs. There was nothing in common between them and myself. My efforts to make at least a show of being one and mutually agreeable were all a gruesome failure.

What can I do? I didn't hang myself, anyway!

Mark Twain said that: "If you pick up a starving dog and feed him with bones he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man."

Even before I could be appointed as a teacher, I voiced my right of being appointed in a high school, and that was in 1941, and, that was also a time when there was a great slump in the job market. Some members of the local legislative council took up the cause and there was a good debate on the subject. I remember to have called on the chief commissioner, J. W. Prichard, early in 1942. I could not understand what he was speaking but I could see him just grinning. That was the first time that I had talked to a British official.

After I began working as a teacher, I came to know a good number of my colleagues, most of whom were just the first-class bluffers and time-serving careerists. I doubt if the younger folk had learnt from them anything useful. It is still difficult for me to unravel the depth and design of some of them with whom I came in contact. Anyway here I must spare them. There was nothing interesting about them. I gave a model lesson for the first time at the South Coorg Teachers' Meet at Ponnampet in 1941, and, presided over the same at Hudikeri in 1942 when Kodandera Muthanna, a senior teacher, introducing me said that I was a 'coming up' man in the Education department of Coorg. But he, and I too, never knew that I would be one who would go away rather than 'coming up'.

My first lecture in Mercara in 1942, and one at the Education Conference in 1943, and some more speeches

and some writings like 'Kodava Samskriti'—all helped me to get nearer the top officials and even the Chief Commissioner, and from then on there was no turning back. Once in 1945, I lectured at the Coorg Teachers' Vacation course, and after my speech, a senior colleague of mine, came straight to me and loudly announced that I would 'one day go away'. He seemed to have been serious in his observation, Later when my book in English on Coorg came, out a good many people frankly told me that my place was not in Coorg but somewhere else, I cannot say how they said so but that was what they said. They must have been seeing me carve my own destined course in life unmindful of impediments.

Once in 1946, the then Education Officer, just dropped in to the staff-room in the evening when the teachers were just relaxing, playing cards or reading newspapers. As he entered, they straightened themselves a bit, rather nervously, and moved around him. I too was there at that time. I straightaway told him to join us to play cards, while the rest of the teachers stood surprised when they heard me say that. But the officer, otherwise grim, just smiled, sat there playing cards for some time and then left. There are incidents like this that showed that I was supremely indifferent to officialdom although not to the officials personally.

There was a teacher called J. Ganesh Rao. People used to think, due to his physical appearance, that he was something extraordinary, although his was a deceptive personality. As headmaster he had no control whatsoever over the things. As Education Officer, he just dragged on a couple of years. Once he told me in the course of some discussion

that, " You see, ministers would not tell lies ". I heard that and burst into a loud laughter and walked out from there. He was left alone, perhaps, to get frozen on his chair. These sorts of cronies in civil service were just a disgrace and nothing more nor less !

There are, of course, a good many incidents of this type, but here I have to say some things with reference to some people. Once when I was on study leave, I needed some money very badly, and Mekerira Madappa, a senior colleague, and previously a headmaster of a middle school, came to my rescue without my asking him for it. He knew my troubles and then volunteered himself to advance me some substantial loan straightaway and then encouraged me to go ahead. That sort of spontaneous gesture of kindness on his part was no doubt a great relief to me. In his retirement, Madappa settled in Virarajpet in his own residence.

Machimada Chengappa, another senior colleague, was a successful headmaster and administrator. Once in 1953, the hostel boys in Virarajpet, created some unruly scene at a circus tent in the night time, and the people began to speak against the headmaster for the lack of discipline. But Chengappa would not be put down so easily. He would jump up from his five and-a-quarter-foot height, and then say, " What ? Should the headmaster carry his bed on his head and then go to sleep at the circus tent all night as a watchman ? " Oh, no ; however, as an Education Officer for two years till 1956, he could not do much. He was at the post at a wrong time during the time of the paleygars who had made a mess of the situation.

Some of those teachers of my time were just a bunch

of careerists. Their general knowledge and attainments were all poor and even questionable. When some people criticised them openly (Page, 304), it was, no doubt, well deserved, though I, as a young teacher, would not let such public gossips go uncondemned. For having had some superfluous idea of fostering a sort of professional unity or some such thing, those mugs taught me to take them as untrustworthy mediocres. Among them were some brahmins who were wagging their vicious tails in which art they were world famous. I had to administer warning to such men to behave better because people like them, I said, with their deceptive licences and degrees of teaching were plenty doing odd jobs in coffee hotels and street groceries in the cities out-side Coorg, and, that I had to say. They were disgustingly sly and timid but totally dishonest and mischievous. Some of them are friendly with the stupid Kodavas for two reasons. Firstly, they have no peace among men of their own breed because of their own plenty of bickerings among them. Secondly, the Kodavas are cheap friends for them for playing one against the other in the streets.

What a hell of delay for me to get some references to my service there, and when I wrote from distant places ? They were my one-time colleagues and yet they were very much sick. Long back one man sent me a note after six months and after several reminders of mine. But, unfortunately he was only that even as an officer, and that was what the newspapers too wrote. In fact, in the 1950s he was more a spy of the then Government than a civil servant. To another man I had to be stiff and would have even gone to the Director of Public Instruction,

and, had he persisted in his silence he would have been in trouble. Such disgusting experiences too I had at the hands of those fellows and it is not difficult for anyone to tell the reasons for their headache of the sort.

There was a man called Chandu, but that Chandu was an impotent. Naturally he found little happiness in his domestic sphere, and so he took to the game of doing some public work, and in interfering in the affairs of others, which was resented by some people, however. But Chandu continued to put up a show of doing something or the other, and he was good in giving a false impression to others that he was good. Once he wrote that he wanted to see his uncle who did not exist at all, and he be permitted to go to visit him taking a month-long leave. The authorities soon came to know through his enemies that Chandu was a crook, and so he was promptly booked. Once a she-buffaloe of his died, and Gundu who was in trouble because of misappropriation of public funds, helped him to bury the animal. Therefore, Chandu was up to uphold Gundu as 'not guilty' and saw that the man who had accused Gundu was taken to task. This kind of thing with Chandu went on in many other cases as well, and all that was due to his dangerous psychological complex of impotence and a feeling of deficiency.

Chandu used to umpire the ping-pong game which he never played and all that was to show up as a normal human being. He seemed to have been averse to the weddings of others because of his own psychological weakness. Once he tried hard to prevent his co-workers from attending the wedding of one who made him known that he was a crook. When Chandu was forced out of his

work he had to slyly go by the back door, but a week before he left, in order to make all the people know that he was still at work, gave an advertisement to a paper giving his address of workspot etc, stating that a pair of his ploughing oxen were missing and anyone tracing them out for him would be given an award of Rs. two per head. Chandu had many other kinds of tricks as well. Fault finding in others was his usual game and with that he used to make up for his psychological weakness. He would stoop to any length to shield the wicked and harm the virtuous if it served his purpose and all that was to quench his hunger to show up among his own small groove as though he was a normal person, when, in fact, he was not. Needless to say that these Chandu, Gundu, Guggu and others were all Kodavas who could have these kinds of names now according to their modern style.

I had known all the lawyers of Coorg of those days but I had no respect at all for their profession although I too, by mistake, had attempted to become one like that. This legal profession as conducted at present, is both a sham and shame. The most successful among them were the cleverest of the crooks and blood suckers. Ghalib, the great saint-singer, sang that when a lawyer is born on earth Satan is happy in hell. Thus it is a widely prevailing and well-organised gangsterism conducted with a show of dignity and with *Black* robes. No one can help it at this stage unless an international body emerges to halt this open and deliberate fraud in public life taking place in the name of law. I would not name even one Vakil as an ideal person, and in India, very few of that tribe are being booked for fraud in comparison to other

countries, when in fact things should have been the other way round.

When Palekanda Mepappa (Page 223) started his Kodava Sabha in 1926, he made use of it for his own political booster. That foreign trained attorney, Koravanda Muthanna, perhaps in his frustrated mood dreamt much good if Goorg joined the former Mysore State and he wrote a booklet on the subject. C.N. Venkappayya was a lawyer who played politics but he was physically routed by angry people in 1929. Venkappayya had to run away holding his turban in hand and was told to mind his own business instead of debunking poor people. Of course, after that he took to mind his own business. The common people had known the kind of political humbug even so early as that. There were some other advocates like that who were nicely slashed. I saw one Kodava lawyer a crony of the paleygars of the 1950s, canvassing for, and collecting lands and selling them to Malayalees and Travancoreans with a dual purpose of making money and to increase the number of non-Kodava voters in order to win another election, which, of course, never came to be. (Pages 399, 419, 442 etc.)

When I left the job there, if I wanted to, I had three lawyers as 'friends' to go about, but the most amusing thing was that I could'n't trust them anymore than I could trust those three or four muddle-headed upstarts of questionable character who ruled the roost in that god-forsaken *Samsthaana* of the time, and from whom I had differed, and who could not touch even a hair of mine even after the best of their efforts. Therefore, as I had already said, I told those hawks who posed as 'guardians

of justice', that I was going out due to my own strictly personal reasons and not for anything else. After everything is said and done, I should here assert once again, that on the whole, this was a fact !

Sometime back a friend wrote to me and asked : ' What do you say if Gupta wrote a book like 'Eternal Quest' ? ' I wrote back to him stating that " I do not know if he would write one on such a subject, but I have seen in India criminals in Khadi or saffron robes prostituting in the night time and writing 'Eternal Quest' in the day time to trade on that. Thus they do both Eternity and Maternity together and that was how our country has 'progressed' so much. Anyway, I am not interested in any 'quest' except sit in a cellar and brood on how to cheat people with fake writings and obsolete ideas to show up, and, if possible, even by misappropriating public funds or receipts. After all, till one is caught one could pose as a saint, and I know there are many who go after some kinds of 'quest', which is another word for humbug, and an 'eternal quest' in the modern times is eternal humbug. Let us be clear about it.

In the Kodagu of the 15th November 1970, someone wrote that a few of the old men who had served well should be honoured. I wrote to them that those men, I knew clearly and authoritatively, as selfish and opportunistic, and their paying their spare money as charity was only to perpetuate themselves in those organisations and nothing else. When I wrote four years back that the old fogies should retire, and make place for the young, it was these people who were in my mind then. However, I wrote back that instead of merely honouring and flattering

them in public meetings, it would be better, I suggested, to raise their statues and erect them in the street corners, and, after all, Coorg too need some statues.

On the eve of my leaving the country in 1960, the one man whom I wanted to see was Dewan Bahadur Chengappa (Page 208) who was then living in his Virarajpet house. I had always admired his star though not him personally. Somehow I found time to call on him and then straight-away knocked his door at 9.40 p.m. after being fully prepared to get myself driven out for making visits at that odd hour. A male worker in the house opened the door. I told him my name and then said to tell his master that it was myself. A few minutes later, the old man emerged out of his room wearing a long coat with his usual well-trimmed moustache, and I greeted him in customary way. "You are the same old Muthanna", he said, and I just managed to grin. Though 88 years old at that time, he was fit and alert. He asked me all the news and I went on talking to him as though I knew everything of the world. Then I switched on to ask about himself who was sitting on the summit of his fortune. As he was talking, it seemed to me that he was active not in the interest of himself or his sons, but for his grand children and great-grand-children. After all, man's ambition has no end. As we talked for some time, the time had shot up to 11'O clock, and, therefore, I excused myself stating that I would not like to take his time anymore, and then with mutual greetings, I took leave of him.

The vast mass of people in India, 999 out of 1000, were loyal to the British Government in those days and that loyalty was unshakeable in spite of all that the politi-

cians were bluffing and with all those distorted versions of history of the so-called freedom movement. However, that loyalty of the Indians to a foreign government was based on factors like fear, selfishness, anti-nationalism and even slavish mentality. Nationalism was completely absent in India till the British taught them to be so in the end of the last century. What I now want to say here is about Mandepanda Mandanna (Page 222), I had known him very well as a neighbour. When Mandanna was in services I was a school boy. Once I saw him from a distance in a very sorrowful mood and terribly put down because of grief. I thought that he had lost someone very near and dear to him. But then the actual fact that moved him was the demise of his Most Excellent and Royal Majesty, George the Fifth, King of United Kingdom and Ireland and of the Dominions beyond the seas, Defender of the Faith, and Emperor of India. That was in 1936.

It was in 1943. While some sports of going on at the Mann's Compound, the then Superintendent of Police, approached me amidst a crowd and politely asked me, 'Are you Vidwan Muthanna?' It seemed strange that a police officer should confront me that way before so many people but he took me by the arms and whispered that the Chief Commissioner had told him all about me, and then asked if I could recite a song for the occasion of the Victory (Tunis) Day celebrations. I agreed even before he finished telling me all that when, at the same time, I grew up half an inch taller due to the opportunity I got to show up. I recited the song before a vast gathering and the entire audience applauded and many top officials congratulated me after that, and one of them even wrote

to my father that I stole the show that day.

Ballachanda Belliappa (Page 203) was one who took things as they came, and, in fact, he had never bothered about anything even as an editor of a small newspaper. He was one from among both the political parties of those days who went to the chief commissioner in 1949 to say that I should be appointed in the newly opened college as I was the only qualified man in my subject at that time. After doing so, Belliappa took some special interest to tell me that, "You see, I have been betrayed by people very badly, but I hope that you will not be one like that". However, with that sort of worry in his mind, I felt sorry for him and his "Janma Bhoomi", which he published just to denounce others whom he did not like and as a mouth-piece of some sort of politicians.

I had known all the doctors of the time, and especially the Kodavas who were good and dedicated to their profession and to their patients though a few of them had just made a habit to grin absent-mindedly. With all that I should here say that I could not till now see an amiable and popular man of medicine like Pattada C. Kariappa. Apart from what the people spoke about his fine qualities, I went to him once complaining of chest pain. As he heard me mumbling, he burst into a loud laughter. He laughed so loudly that I thought whether I had any sort of pain at all and soon I found that I had nothing of the kind. Dr. Kariappa still in a jovial mood, did not even care to examine me but sent me away saying that I was just bluffing, and there ended the whole matter.

I had never seen another unlucky man in Coorg civil service as one in Biddanda G. Achayya. Achayya was

an intellectual in his own right. May be, that mere appearing for the Indian Civil Service examinations was no qualification, and yet to reach that stage was no joke in those days. When a hoard of misfits, crooks and third-rate clerks who used to write mischievous and malicious comments on official papers were thriving around, Achayya's star kept on tossing him from place to place. I had known him well in the 1940s, and last I saw him was in 1962 in the Vidhana Soudha when he was an under-secretary in some department. He is now retired and settled in his ancestral land in Goorg. I see his son with some non-Kodava name, coming up in some foreign universities.

It was in 1944. At Ponnampet I was facing a big gathering. Some of the top officials were also sitting there in the front and looking on ! I had forgotten myself on the stage reciting something or whatever that came to my mind. Then a voice came from aside stating 'button, button'. I could not understand why he was worried about the poor button. But then again he said in a slow voice, "your trousers, trousers, button.....". What he wanted me to do was to fix the trousers' button properly, and, I think I did it as I proceeded with my monotony. Anyway, how much open the 'button' was, I didn't know, and no one told me about that afterwards.

A week before a drama show for the public was scheduled, arrangements were made to sell tickets to the people. In the meantime, some tramps, probably the school boys, got the same type of tickets printed in the same pattern. paper, founts and the same wordings and then sold them and pocketed the money. This was in

Virarajpet in 1946. When the boys from Mercara approached the public of Virarajpet, they were surprised to find that most of those people had already had indentical tickets and for the same show. Well, on the day, the drama was enacted, the school hall was crowded to suffocation with no place even to stand, and, as a result, some hundreds of ticket holders including those Mapillas, had to get back without finding accommodation. Later, after the show was over, the collections of the day were counted with great expectations, when it was shocking to find that the total collection was only about Rs. 200 and odd when from all estimation it should have been not less than Rs. 1000/-. Now, look, how the things went on with the younger generation of my time, and some of whom must now be the leaders of the people, at least in the village panchayats.

Now, coming again to personalities, I remember another senior teacher Pattamada Poovayya. As he grew older he talked little but the story of his personal life would, perhaps, read like a romance. Once about half-a-dozen boys were suspended from the school for being unruly. An aggrieved parent came to the school to plead the case of his suspended son, and, later he talked to all the teachers on behalf of all the boys saying that boys were after all boys. Pattamada Poovayya sat quiet at the meeting throughout, but, soon after that he told the parent, rather unsparingly, that: "Look here, Mister... .., Why do you speak for all the suspended boys? Instead of that you look after your own son who is a leading loafer." The poor parent was shocked and was terribly put down, and the rest of the teachers looked on dazed and obviously happy at the way Poovayya did the job. But what is of interest

is that 'leading loafer' has already become a leading politician. So Pattamada Poovayya should say whether the tramps and loafers in schools and colleges alone could become politicians of the type that we see today in the country. However, that was Poovayya. He retired from service after serving as a headmaster for three or four years. Later, I congratulated that 'loafer' for becoming a 'leader', but he said that he was serving the people.

I had known Moodera Thimmayya, a chatter-box. He knew to keep everyone around him happy. Once at a funeral, just two days before the Keilmhurtha festival, Thimmayya started asking the people there—the mourners—as to from where he could get some pork. He first saw me somewhere in a crowd in 1943, and asked, "May I know who you are?" I looked straight into his eyes wondering who he was, and then he answered his question himself. From then on, we used to meet very often. Once he said, "Look, I retired as a judicial Shirestedar with my primary school education, and, today only graduates could aspire for such jobs, and, even then I doubt if they could do such work as efficiently as we did". Thus bragged Thimmayya, but he was too true. I was quick to agree with his observations. "You are perfectly right," I said, and the old man beamed.

It was in 1945. I joined some senior public workers to canvass for prohibition. We went round telling people some good things which nobody wanted to listen. We also told them not to use liquor during the weddings and so on. During our one such house-to-house campaign, we got into a house where an old drunkard and a convert to the other caste, had taken shelter. He was Cheppudira

Machayya who had found stranded himself in the evening of his life. Every word of his smelt intoxication and perversion. Like others, I too tried to tell him something but as soon as I began to speak, he shouted me down in the same way he did to others. His voice was terrible. We thought that something was seriously wrong with him, and it was a fact also. He was fully loaded but exactly with how many barrels of liquor we could'nt say.

There were some others in the town against whom I used to dash in my quest for some useful information. Kithianda Kalappa, a retired sub-magistrate, who was perhaps the last among the Kodavas to wear turban regularly. Among other things, I asked him what those people of the earlier days were doing with so much paddy and other grains grown when there were very few people to consume that. He said that people used to throw away all surplus produce; and almost everyone was a grower; consumers were very few when there were no towns anywhere of more than a couple of hundreds of people. Even those labour class people used to take only as much as they needed and not more. Perhaps, a sort of socialism, he said with his bland smile.

Kodandera Madappa, the father of the general, was occasionally taking me to the road-side gossips on current topics, and sometimes he would keep on chatting and even explaining some etymological significance of some words, names of places etc. Once he said that Nooroklu village, 100 Voklus or families, came from outside and camped and developed the place. Similarly, Arvathoklu of sixty families and Nalvathoklu of forty families, were the villages where the people from outside

came and then settled, and those villages were so named. I used to listen to him with all the attention he deserved and then pass on.

Mathanda Kuttayya, the retired Survey Officer, was another interesting person whom I used to meet every now and then. When Niddemane Muddappa and Iychettira Subbayya were heckled by the staff and students of Mercara high school in 1946 (Vide page 304 to 307), the general impression of the people was that it was myself the cause for the incident. May it be so. Two days later, this Kuttayya, in a spirit of appreciation, patted me for what had happened and jokingly remarked that KODALI KAAVU KULAKKE KEDU. I liked the way he put it though I would not say that I relished it. However, I must here say that this Kuttayya was an impressive personality, and was an expert in his profession.

There was that Codanda Muddappa, a retired Police Inspector, who, of course, was going about in non-police suit and a hat even in the late evenings. I remember him for one thing. He gave me the first and a very valuable clue for getting the culprits who stoned my room in the hostel (Vide page 309). Muddappa took me aside and said, "Muthanna, you are a nice young man, I know; and I was thinking to tell you that those boys who did that were at the residence of their Guru at 9. 30 p.m." That gave me the whole story of the 'stone' as well as of the 'rock'. Thus Muddappa had still kept up his detective spirit even long after he had retired from service.

Kademada Dr. Kurumbayya was another industrious and interesting old man. As many doctors do in their retirement, he too did: his private dispensary would be

open three hours in the morning every day and then he would go home and get busy working in his own piece of wetland near his house in the town. Once I caught him working in the slushy field, and I appreciated the audacity of the old man, but as soon as he saw me, he ran up to me in order to drag me too into the muddy water. Of course, I ran away for my life and escaped from him. That was the way how some older people kept themselves busy and lively.

Kayapanda Devayya was the retired Forest Range Officer. He was a man of the soil, a realist, industrialist and shrewd. His knowledge of human affairs, stories, epics and anecdotes enlivened his conversations. He was a regular visitor to the club and he and the club had almost become inseparable. After playing bridge for hours, he would walk back home for miles with his friends in the dead of night and the only topic he would discuss all the way till he reached his house was about the spades, hearts, diamonds and clubs, and about their placements in the game. That was perhaps a moment of supreme relaxation for Devayya and the older people of his type.

Iychettira Appacha, an intellectual of my family, an old F.A., with brilliant English, beautiful handwriting, robust commonsense and good personality, was a man with whom I used to talk on some serious matters and topics. As a conversationalist he was lively and upright and as a government official, incorruptible and honest. The poor man was let down by his star in his later days, but, nevertheless, I had admired him for his profound knowledge of the affairs around him.

In our quest for funds for one project or the other,

some of us used to travel from Kutta to Kodlipet. Once three or four of us went to a man, perhaps, by mistake. He was Kuppanada Appayya, a petty zamindar, planter and a retired forest officer. We just managed to tell him as to why we were there but he burst out saying that he had nothing to spare. He said that he had paid Rs. 5/- to the Kodagu Company a quarter century back and that he could not get a single paisa as dividend. "Oh God, his Rs. 5/-and his dividend on that for which he was waiting that long", I thought, and then all of us walked out thanking ourselves for having had the good fortune of being fed each with a cup of coffee.

There were of course some queer characters and each one of them was remarkable in his own way. There was, for instance' Puchimada Madayya, a crank and a self-styled President of an organization which did not exist, and of which the only member was himself. He used to travel all over, holding a bulging handbag with odd pieces of paper and old letters. He would threaten people saying that he was in correspondence with the Viceroy of India. Madayya had only one story to say of his fake achievements about which no one else knew and about which he would tell one-hundred times to the same man without even taking the trouble to remember that he had already told him the same story 99 times on different occasions. Thus, Madayya used to keep his unfortunate victims awake, who were otherwise sleepy.

There were occasions when people accidentally or intentionally had taken me in good spirits and I used to enjoy that. Pulianda Uthappa was a neighbour and an admirer of mine. He had long been wanting to see me

while I was at home, and, in fact, he did come and then left. But the inscrutability of providence was that only after two days he was a victim of a sudden stroke. That was in 1957, and back in 1950, a similar case was that of Biddanda Bopayya, an old nationalist and one of the first Congressmen. He had not known me personally and yet he spotted me out somewhere in Mercara and then talked to me in intimate terms on many things for quite a long time. I was impressed by his frankness mixed up with some eccentricities. However, in about a month after that I learnt that he was no more. Such things too did happen, though those were not unusual.

Kongettira B. Muddappa, a resident in Mercara and a planter ten miles away, was one who was as much shrewd as he was deaf. If he had been there today, he would have been much pleased to see a book like this by me. He was the one who had visualised long back in 1940s that I would one day do such a job as this and that I would one day go about in the way I did so far. Among other senior citizens I may casually name here Kodandera M. Aianna, Mandepanda Chinnappa, retired sanitary Inspector, Mandettira Cheramana, a retired Estate Manager, and a few others whose company I enjoyed.

What about that Kambiranda Belliappa, a former member of the legislative council, and whose specimen of the council speech is given at Page 316 of this book? He came to limelight very late in his life and yet he showed himself as somewhat interesting. Belliappa could be easily influenced by any man for a vote provided that vote-gatherer went to him in the dead of night without being seen by any dogs and cats, and that was exactly the

way Belliappa exercised his franchise as a council member in 1946. Two days after I left the job, I saw him sitting in a bus, and casually asked him, "What's the news?" Belliappa shot back saying: "What? You make the news and then ask others about news?" That was an unexpected quick wit of Belliappa.

Now, let me close this chapter referring to one Munjandira Aiappa, another retired Government-official. A short but not stout, and a down-to-earth realistic and practical man of high spirits, to whom the construction and erection of the Kodava Samaja building should be credited. Those were the days in the later 1940s when the richer men would not be liberal in their contributions, and a good many of those opportunists were even afraid to contribute anything, but Aiappa's perseverance to collect money from here and there for his day-to-day work of piling up of the bricks to raise walls of the building was a tremendous job for him. Ninety percent of the photographs that are hung in the Samaja Hall are those of the time-servers and anti-nationalists, and they did nothing. Years after the building came up they dangled their money along with their photographs while some of them were even ridiculing the efforts of the people like Aiappa. I know them, and, therefore, I add that a few of them did not even contribute much money for all that fanfare displayed there. I feel that it is time to throw away those 90 per cent of the photographs from there (of course, after thanking them again for their contributions) and have only of those ten per cent sincere nationalists and 'brick-layers' who struggled to build shelters to house 'the rest of the cynics of the so-called Samaja.

78. CHENGAPPA AND GANAPATHY IN SCHOOLS.

The birth of my son Chengappa at ten'o clock in the morning when the heavens were in a sparkling purity, gave me a spontaneous joy, and I was not sure of the significance that caused me so much delight. I announced the news of the new-comer to my colleagues in the school and then offered myself to throw a party to them in honour of his arrival. As long as we were in India, the boy had his kindergarten schooling in the Indian environment where he quickly picked up different dialects and languages which he forgot soon while moving from country to country. However, his inquisitive eyes and soothing countenance was the source of all my hopes and joys all along and the forecast that the boy would have all his education in foreign countries, was almost beginning to work out with my unfulfilled ambition of going abroad that I had cherished in the 1940s taking shape from then on in the 1950s.

After we left for Africa where the standard of education was much better and very much higher than that of India, according to the widely accepted views, Chengappa was well ahead in his class and obtained very good reports consistently. When he was nine years old, he was in the ninth grade, and was "good in all the subjects". Later he was put in an oldest and much esteemed high school of Addis Ababa, Ethioipa, where he was promoted to the 12th Grade when he was just 12 and a few months old, in 1965. By this time he had obtained certificates of merit in some subjects, especially English and Mathematics. All his marks were above sixty per cent, and the school reports said that Chengappa "worked very well; he is well-behaved.....and he has a good brain". His School Leaving

Certificate said that he was "a bright student, and his conduct has been excellent". His teachers were vociferous in their praise to him when they gave an account of his progress in classes.

The main object of my change over from Ethiopia to England despite another three-year contract for both my wife and myself to stay on, was the education of my two boys. I felt that they deserved a better environment than the one they already had in India and Africa. In England, I decided to stay in London in spite of the obstacles brought in my way by the authorities there and I stuck on to my views in the interest of the boys and myself. I had, of course, some better work to do there apart from the bread-and-butter view of the situation.

Luckily we got a nice location in North London, and Chengappa was put in Finchley Grammar School which was one of the best in the city. To begin with, they admitted him into a class in consideration of his age but soon they waived the age rules in his case, and that was a rare thing they did in the English schools, and he was put in a higher class. From then on, his class reports were 'excellent' and in the first term, they said that his was "a very satisfactory beginning". The headmaster's report of June 1966, said that "Chengappa had produced conscientious work, and good in results in the scientific and mathematical subjects. He has been a most helpful and quiet pupil".

He has been consistently good in English, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. In mathematics, they said that he was "definitely very able", and generally "a quiet and serious student". In Chemistry, his work "has been very good". In 1968, the report said that he "did excell-

ently with fine understanding of the subjects”. In Physics, he was “a fine scientist in the making”. Chengappa completed the O’Level examination in June 1968 obtaining A-Grade in pure Maths, Physics and Chemistry, B Grade in English literature and “very impressive performance” in the rest of the subjects.

In 1969, Chengappa was up as a “quiet and thoughtful member of the group”. His teachers poured upon him tributes for his glittering performance. In Physics, they felt “sure that he could be outstanding. He has a natural ability for the subject”. Under Applied Maths., they wrote that he “says very little in the class, but he has also worked very well”. The headmaster’s report added that, “I hope for big things in his scientific future. Chengappa enjoys his life in a quiet way and I am sure he will do well”.

On the eve of the selection of the students for entrance to the Universities, on the basis of their school reports, the response that Chengappa got was impressive, and finally after a formal interview, he was absorbed by the Imperial Institute of Science and Technology, London University. The choice was his even though he was eligible to any English University, including Oxford and Cambridge, the ancient Universities into which I had liked him to join.

The report of Chengappa’s final school year was encouraging. It said that he “has a good mathematical imagination”. In Chemistry he was ‘excellent’, and ‘could obtain very high grades’. In liberal studies, he was ‘very conscientious’. The headmaster’s remarks were that ‘Chengappa is quiet and individualistic, but he

makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. I am very pleased with the success he has already had in University entrance'.

A letter of the 1st December 1969, to Chengappa from the University of London, said: "I am pleased to inform you that the department of Mathematics has recommended your admission to the college in the session 1970-71, to read for the B.Sc. degree...Needless to say, this offer would not have been made unless it was felt, as a result of interview and all other information available, that you would be able to achieve a much higher standard than 'pass' at Advanced Level...".

So when the results of his Advanced Level examinations were out, it showed as desired and as anticipated, a better gradation, and his path to the collegiate course was made easy. Chengappa had five years' education in Ethiopia, and another five years' Pre-University Education in England before he moved into one of the renowned institutions of higher learning, when he was just seventeen and a half, and with a height of five feet and ten inches. His home has now moved from India to the other hemisphere and on holidays he visits his parents in Canada, and during the shorter breaks, he travels for professional purposes in the European countries. Now he is up snubbing one and all saying that he could look after himself, and that is what any parent would expect of his children. With the cash award and recognition that he got I certainly felt that I was greatly relieved in respect of his future.

My second son Ganapathy had the same privileges and opportunities for his education, but he had to experience some setbacks from the very beginning, and that

caused some jolt for his steady progress. Nevertheless, with the best of the environments, Ganapathy too was not far behind, and, in fact, he showed remarkable progress in his class performance. In Maths and English, he too did well, and he showed some interest in independent thinking, writing etc. His reports in the Ethiopian schools was as usual good and he completed his middle school examination when he was eleven years old.

But in England, again the age restriction rules troubled him more than to anyone else. As he was made to sit for a year at the Martin Junior School at East Finchley, I had to be furious with the authorities for their strange rules, but then all that was of no use. Ganapathy had "a very good year in all respects", according to the report of the school. He was "well-behaved, well-mannered and well-liked". He secured A-Grade in all the major subjects. The arrangement to make him sit in the top class of a junior school, seemed to have done him good. According to the school authorities, "it was in the interest of the boy", and they considered "his transfer to a Grammar School as a normal age candidate" from September 1966.

Later as he moved on to the Grammar School, his "progress has been very satisfactory". He was "quiet and conscientious, and always took a keen and intelligent interest in the work in hand". He was also good in languages like German and French, and showed the promise "to catch up". He too secured 'A Grade' in all the major subjects. Moreover both these boys had ample scope for their extra studies. They took keen interest in the making of radios etc along with the postal tuition arrangements.

Ganapathy had to move to Canada from London in

November 1968, and his progress on the eve of his leaving was encouraging. In English "his work has been invariably thorough, and of a high standard and he deserved an excellent result", wrote his class teacher. So also in Mathematics, but he was poor in history, geography and French, His headmaster wrote that, "Ganapathy is a most industrious pupil". As long as he was in London, he was very active, obtained form prizes, and he was one of the eight prize winners for 1967-68. His leaving certificate for the year said that, "This is to certify that Ganapathy joined the school on the 6th September 1966, and since then has followed a typical Grammar School course including English, French, German, Maths, Science etc...In this country, children are admitted to Grammar Schools if they are in the top 25 percent of the ability range, and as he is rather above half-way in his year group, I think we may say he is in the top ten percent. He has done well in Maths and Science, and to our delight, he headed the examination list in English...He is cheerful and industrious."

In a separate letter to the parents, the Headmaster wrote that: "I am sending a recommendation for Ganapathy to take to his new school in Canada. We are very sorry to lose him as he had done very well here, and we hope he will be equally successful where he is going".

In Canada I stayed in Vancouver, one of the beautiful cities in the west coast of North America, and Ganapathy was put in a nice city school. But with opportunities to earn his own pocket money, his progress in class seemed to have lagged behind. In 1970-71, he was in the 12th Grade, and it was almost an uphill task to make him reach the top as admissions to Universities in these countries are

strictly selective. But the boy is confident of his future, and so are his teachers, and he shows signs of his confidence in all his activities, and has now won a scholarship as well !

In the meantime, I am becoming as one belonging to almost the old stone age. Both my boys pooh-pooh my antiquated ways although they are not disrespectful to the views and sentiments of others. They challenge me with their modern scientific and technical knowledge, and I bluff them that I had already read all that while in the school and they obviously take such things as a joke. They also take delight in challenging me in some ways but I tell them that when I was their age I would encounter four or five at a time and slash them, but they wouldn't believe even that either. My writings and speeches and other activities are insipid to them and they find me as a queer individual of the medieval times going about with such things in this moon age, nor would they care to listen to my ancient sermons.

With all that they have in their veins the love and respect for the heritage to which they belong. Chengappa in that way would one day come up to the top as an ideal citizen. From the moment he saw the Light of the Sun, he has been 'yogic' in his ways and has been a perfect introvert. He is a vegetarian from his infancy and he would not relish things which the gods forbid. He had been winning laurels in his academic field even from his early teens and he reveals a robust commonsense, a broad outlook on affairs and a vast and erudite knowledge.

As to Ganapathy, there are some negative aspects, and yet he makes up in many ways. If he is not up to the

mark in an ideal sense of the term, it is basically not his defect. He is quick in grasping things and alert to situations. Being a very good chess player, he has already become an active member of the Chess Federation of Canada! He makes a perfect and reliable friend among his associates. He has been rightly recommended for higher institutions and has just been enrolled as a student of the Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada. In 1971, he has thus stepped into another stage of his academic career, while Changappa had already completed his first year at the above-said Imperial Institute of Science & Technology, London University, and this year-1971, he again undertook his holiday trip to Canada.

I have a baby girl of five years old now, and who is twelve years younger to Ganapathy. What is of interest is that this little 'brat' too threatens us with impressive expressions and catchy phrases along with all sorts of rhymes and songs. Her luck was seen in the way when a nursery school was put up just a few yards from her house only after a few days she moved into the residence where we now reside in Canada. That solved her problem of the time even before we could think of that. Now in 1971, she has just 'graduated' from the Nursery school, and as I write this now she is eagerly waiting to join a 'big' school after the holidays. Dark in complexion, sharp in intellect and with a gift to understand her 'friends', she has shown herself as very popular in the company of kids of other nationalities- mostly the whites. Anyway she too kept me wondering by her wits and chats as to what a novice I am!

Of course, I enjoy myself of being so and nothing

more. I would always be at home in the company of the like-minded young, innocent and yet intelligent faces that enlighten the sore and shattered hearts. But then these kids have been reminding me that my trouble was that I am expecting that everyone else should be like me. They would not know that that is only a half-truth.

Let me, however, warn the readers here and now that when I say these things I am not indulging in any sort of self-praise just out of filial affection or such thing. It is said that affection has roots in ignorance and illusion, and in my case, I should say, it is true. In fact, it is that 'ignorance and illusion' that had made me in the past to stick on to all sorts of hoax without even thinking twice about things, and it is that same thing again that made me write all that I wrote in this book. However, I have been quite open-minded in my views all along both when I praise or criticise people, and, therefore, I should be here allowed to make this objective assessment of facts, howsoever distasteful that may be for others.

79. SOME CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

Before coming to the concluding part of this book, I take the opportunity of correcting a few of the printing mistakes and factual errors that have crept into this haphazard narrative of this 'memoirs'. The readers are requested to go through this errata first and correct those mistakes as given and then proceed through the chapters :

Page	Line	Wrong	Right.
46	9	Kodavas were in those days	Kodavas in those days
49	16	this men was	this man was

54	20	a ruler was	a ruler there was
55	4	the must cases	the most cases
„	13	wich produce	which produce
56	3	and too copied	and he too copied
57		headline; Where and	When and Where ?
		Where	
59	30	when actually	when he actually
61	18	till 1950	till 1850
62	3	In it from 1834 ?	Is it from 1834 ?
66	14	of the with	of the new era with
76	20	Nehru-in states	Nehrus in states
77	19	extra post has	extra cost has
83	12	why should any	why any of us
		of us	
84	24	economics fronts	economic fronts
87	12	mysterious causes	mysterious caucus
91	9	talking a neutral	taking a neutral stand
		stand	
101	8	arrogance	arrogance
105	5	Council also	Council alone should
		should	
110	20	forget their own	forgot their own
135	19	the boon under	the book under
141	22	time at all what	at all to see what
153	20	none other man	none other than
160	18	this man was	this man who was
166	2	also qoutes	also quotes
166	27	is on insult	is an insult
173	26	economic and	economic & social sense
		sense	
191	18	men women	men and women

201	21	Mutiny of 1837	of 1857
212	9	in 1814	in 1894
241	19	teacher in Mercara	teacher in Virarajpet
262	8	and hose were	and those were
271	11	coffee maund	coffee candy
285	19	was not known as such	was known as such
288	15	people though hat	people thought that
349	7	taken up to dubling	taken to dabbling
377	27	to do better anything	to do anything better
378	17	doing that with	not doing that with
378	19	am not not doing	am not doing
383	14	he wrote to him	he wrote to me
384	1	are ater than	are greater than
389	17	with kind of suit	with a kind of suit
396	2	This is I am	This I am
406	2	headache, of course,	and, of course,
414	16	on the day new	On the day the new
420	15	of four pears	of four years
439	29	where set aside	were set aside
447	21	could not get from no one	could not get from anyone
464	6	the lower of money	the lover of money
487	21	even be friended	even befriended
503	24	Thrust them	Trust them
543	31	hat loyalty	that loyalty

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- 176 10 Here the mistake was that I understand that three or four daughters of his were married to the Kodava families.
- 196 19 Mathanda Appacha-the hero of the wars of the 1830s was the same man, I am told, who became one of the chief officials of the Coorg Government in 1860s. The fact that there were two men of the same name as father and son or grandson, is wrong.
- 204 11 This M. Belliappa belonged to the Maniapanda family, and the rest of the facts given about him are right.
- 205 24 M. Bollamma is the daughter of the above said Maniapanda Belliappa.
- 225 18 Chonira Muthamma, daughter of Chonira Belliappa, first Indian woman to enter the Indian foreign service cadre in 1949, became the first woman career diplomat when she was appointed as ambassador to Hungary in August 1970. At page 211, it was said of Chonira Cheramana who was the first envoy from Coorg to Srirangapatna in 1763-64. Muthamma belonged to that same family.
- 228 10 Codanda Muthayya, senior athletic coach at National Institute of sports in Patiala, was invited to participate in the third International Seminar on biomechanics organised by the International Council of Sports and Physical Education (Unesco) held at Rome in September 1970.

- 248 11 Some more information is given about this same Kariappa in this chapter, a few lines ahead.
- 248 13 This name 'Poovayya' is subject to correction as I am not sure of the name of that man although the family name given there is correct.

Some facts concerning a couple of men and women have just come to my notice and I thought that it was worthwhile adding them here in these pages. For instance, it took some time for me to learn that Biddanda S. Chengappa (Page 207), who was for a long time a conservator of forests in the Andamans, was also an internationally recognised expert in forestry. His services were rewarded more than 100 times including his being honoured with an island near the Andamans named after him and so also a wing of the forest college in Coimbatore. He was one of the 17 experts in forestry selected to take part at the Commonwealth Forest Experts' Conference. Chengappa, a Rao Sahab of the British times, retired in 1952 after 40 years of fruitful service. He died in March 1971 (Courtesy The Kodagu-23-4-1971).

A significant Kodava name that was left out in the list of 'Who is Who' was that of Dr. Konganda Thammu Achayya, born in 1923, educated in Madras University and obtained a doctorate in Science in Liverpool, England. Currently Achayya is in the Regional Research Laboratory in Hyderabad. He had been abroad on deputations more than ones and has presided over two international Science conferences, once in Texas in 1965, and again at Rotterdam in 1968. Dr. Achayya is an internationally recognised

scientist with several papers on the subject to his credit.

A couple of young Goorg ladies of Bangalore had made a name for themselves a few years back as good All-India tennis players, and they are Chendrimada Dechu Appayya and Konganda Cherri Chittiana, and, so also one Pattamada K. Belliappa of Madras, as a good cricket player of South India. Recently, Palekanda Nirmala Uthayya, a student of Mount Carmel College, Bangalore, has come up in the all India sport as a top sprinter among the girls. She entered the field of sport in 1967 and became the Bangalore University champion in 200 and 400 metre races and thereafter she participated in the national athletics several times and at different places and hit the headlines of the sport journals of India and has been a recipient of several awards and gold medals.

Furthermore, like some other Goorg ladies of the earlier times who were experts in some fine arts, one Mrs. Rani Nanjappa (Nadikerianda), of Bombay, has made her mark as a good painter and her works have found place in the National Gallery of the Modern Art of the Indian cities and at the Contemporary Indian Artists Show at some European cities.

There are some more additions that I should make here. After I wrote two or three articles in October 1969 on the Kodavas who had modern education during the years 1870 and 1900, I was asked by some friends to give an account of those peoples in greater detail, and here I would mention their names and thus pass on.

I had given the names of three doctors at pages 201, 215 and 229. Among the rest of the doctors who did F.A. as well as L. M. & S., were Pandanda Belliappa (Page

247), Cheppudira Ganapathy and Ajjikuttira Aianna, and these three were the school endowment scholars as well. Among the rest of the hospital assistants, the names of Kongettira Mandanna, Cheranda Somanna, Cheranda Achayya, Malettira Uthappa and Devanira Kunjappa could be mentioned.

Among the pleaders of those times, apart from the names mentioned at pages 230 and 236, the others who came later during almost the same time were Kodimanianda Monnappa, Codanda Uthayya, Bittianda Nanjappa and Kodimanianda Subbayya. As to the full-fledged lawyers and barristers of the end of the last century, two important persons were named at pages 209 and 229. Among the rest of the barristers, Apparanda Kariappa was the subjudge of Goorg. Cheppudira Machayya served for a long time at Bellary. Koravanda Muthanna was the Munsiff at Virarajpet from 1907 to 1930. The last of the barristers, was Kambiranda Ganapathy (Page 230) who served in the old Madras State.

Among the Engineers of the earlier times, two important names were given at Pages 220 and 233. Another significant figure in the same field was Codanda Kariappa who retired as the Chief Electrical Engineer of the former princely States of Kashmir and Mysore. He was honoured by the Mysore State title of Rajasevasakta and he was held in great esteem as the son of Rao Bahadur Madayya (Vide Page 221), one of the top officials during the time of the Dewan Sir Seshadri Iyer. Kariappa's son, known by the same name, was the general manager of the Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bangalore.

As to the Forest officers of the late last century, except

that of Palekanda Uthayya, the names of others have found place at pages 207, 209 and 227.

Among the teachers of the pre-1900-Coorg, (Vide pages 193 and 212), there was one B.A., in Chendrimada Kuttappa of the Madras Christian college, and two F.A.s, in Chonira Kariappa and lychettira Monnayya- both of the Central College, Bangalore. Pandanda Bopayya (Page 247) served as the physical training teacher at Mercara for some time, and other pre-Matric teachers of the 1870s, well-versed in English, were Mathanda Machayya, Bittianda Devayya and Munjandira Kariappa. The latter two men were school supervisors during Rev. Rich-tor's time in the 1870s.

There were some more brilliant Kodava students in Madras Christian College, Mangalore Aloysius College and the Central College, Bangalore, Among the graduates mentioned at pages 205, 218 etc, there were also Paruvan-gada Bhimayya (1889) and Malettira Machayya (1892) who served in the revenue department of the Coorg government. Among the significant F.A.s of the 1880s were Ballachanda Ganapathy, Bittianda Mandanna, Machi-mada Machayya and Konganda Ponnappa. In the 1887 batch of the F.A.s, there were Codanda Appayya who retired as Assistant Commissioner in 1916, Koluvanda Devayya, Codands Subbayya and Biddanda Nanjappa. Most of these belonged to the Christian College, Madras, and the rest were of the Central College, Bangalore, Aloy-sius College, Mangalore and the Presidency College Madras., All these were the school endowment scholars.

In the batch of students of 1886 and 1888, there were Palekanda Belliappa, later the Subedar, Cheppudira Bid-

dappa, later to become planter, Kodandera Subbayya, Mukkatira Bopayya, Kayapanda Ganapathy, Nadikerianda Uthayya, Codanda Chengappa and Bittianda Muddayya. Most of these, and a few others named under 'Who is Who' (Vide pages 190 to 250), had made a name in those days both for themselves and for Coorg as good scholars and all-rounders. Some of these were outstanding in games and sport. Many of them joined the Coorg Government service after doing two or three-year University studies and some of them died young while still in service.

Kuppanda Subbayya was one of the above batch of school endowment scholars of 1887. He was the first among the Kodavas to become a police Inspector. Codanda Machayya of the 1889 batch, of the Central College, Bangalore, became a high-rank police officer in Bangalore. There were two students of Agriculture at the Sydapet Agricultural Institute, Madras, and one was Kuppanda Muddayya of 1893 and the other Cheppudira Muthanna of 1894. The names of the most of the Kodava students of the 1890s who were in colleges outside, have appeared elsewhere in this book with reference to one thing or the other. They had all come up in their respective fields.

Among the non-Kodavas who had been the School Endowment scholars and F A.s of the last century were M. Balachandra of 1881 who joined the civil service, M. Srinivasa Rao of 1895, who was for a long time the head-master of the Virarajpet English School and C.N. Subraya of 1897, who retired as the Registrar of the cooperative societies. Some of the prominent non-Kodavas of the recent times who were in the forefront of the public life or civil service, were C. N. Venkappayya, the lawyer,

B. Sripati Rao, the planter, Abdul Ghafur Khan, the zamindar, C.M. Rama Rao, the educator, and Nidtha Subbannayya, a public worker and a donor of the building to the Kodagu Press and the landholders, association.

All those Kodavas who had University education during the first thirty years from 1871, with the exception of a few who belonged to the well-to-do families, were helped by the Coorg Endowment Fund, and Rs. 15/-a month as scholarship was a substantial amount at that time. Education, in those days, was a rare commodity, the standard was high and an educated one was almost an enlightened one as well. The sons and grandsons of those people, barring a few exceptions, did not come up to the limelight either in the intellectual sense or otherwise, and even among those who came up did not reach the expected mark. That showed that individuals come up themselves and hereditary cases count only in rare cases.

With this I think I have mentioned all those prominent or significant names, and especially of those educated between the years 1870 and 1900. When I write this now in 1971, the educational development in Coorg took one full circle of 100 years, because it was in 1871, the two Kodava boys, Codanda Madayya and Mathanda Chengappa, appeared for the first time for the Metriculation examination, and one had to go to Bangalore during those first ten years from Mercara for appearing to the examination. Again it was in 1871, the Normal School for teachers was opened in Mercara, and also the Girls' School. A wing of the Mercara hostel and school endowment fund property near Ammathy were all opened

during that year and thus the educational movement began in full swing and one could see the progress now in 1971, after 100 years with two arts' colleges, two technical institutions, and 47 high schools in such a small district, and that is indeed a good record compared to any state or city in India.

A few Kodavas of the earlier days worked outside Coorg and then returned and settled and that was how some old houses in Mercara and elsewhere are seen, whereas these days they try to go out and expand their interests there and settle there. In that way the times are changing and they have already changed vastly. The provincial, cultural and national barriers no longer restrict man to be inside his superficial environments. A great amount of inter-district and inter-provincial influx of people is taking place and the problem of the country is becoming so vast and complex that it is becoming almost certain that man might lose his grip and move about in desperate search of shelter and fortune.

PART VIII

EPILOGUE.

80. THE DREAM THAT TOOK ME TO SHORES

I

I have come to the last pages—the concluding part of this memoir. This is a bunch of stray thoughts ; the facts collected from here and there—mostly from my own personal files, and all that together makes this a work of a queer mind. Some portions of this book were written some time back and now when I compiled this work to give to the press, I did not take the trouble to change any of that, especially the chapters No. 25 to 33, or from pages 112 to 177, though some of those facts appear a bit out of date. I did not have any time to revise all that and hence I let the contents go to the press as it was.

Years back I had dreamt a wonderful dream while in deep sleep. Most of the dreams, as all know, are sheer superficial as they always are, but this one that I had dreamt twice, almost in an identical way, was certainly a thing that had a great significance. I had already come half way of the earth but even then in the dream I was flying over the seas to a far off country, and the destination seemed to have been the top of the Rockies. When I dreamt that way for the first time I had to ignore that as nonsense but the same thing was experienced for the second time and that certainly did it, and that started to work exactly that way from about 1960. All this I write now

from the place that I had twice dreamt, where I would certainly be.

I said that I have deliberately omitted to mention the scope of my activities outside Coorg, and, if God wills, I may write all that at a later date, but suffice it to mention that I spent most of the years in the field of Education and I taught in all sorts of educational institutions—Arts Colleges, Technical Colleges, Vocational Institutes etc. etc. It was this kind of teaching to the students who included those of the B.A., and M.A., classes afforded me the education that I needed most. At Ethiopia, I was the last Indian headmaster *cum* director of the High School to which post they seldom appointed Indians. Later with the scheme of Ethiopianization they began to appoint foreign educated Ethiopians for such posts. That took me out from there but with a contract to work for another three years. In England as visiting teacher at public schools and technical Institutes, and with plenty of free time for other activities, it was certainly enjoyable. However, now, I am here in Canada and I do not want to elaborate things for the moment because I have to put an end to this work which has already gone to this bulk.

Most of what is written here in this memoir is from the memory of the past, and if it is a memory of the past pain or even pleasure, it may be a sacred heritage, and not a regret. But the pain becomes more severe when good intentions are humiliated. Indeed, the Biblical truth is that "the road to hell is paved with good intentions". Therefore, I have no regrets.

But once in a way one should speak out. If we don't speak out and put up with the things endlessly, that is, no

doubt, fear. James Lowell had versified that "they are slaves who fear to speak- for the fallen and weak."

However, I don't pose as though I have spoken "for the fallen and weak". I have spoken for myself when I found that no one spoke for me. Everyone has let me down from the beginning to the end, and all that was for good. I did not bother to speak about them here as it would not be of any interest for others. I am not finding fault with any one in spite of all that I said here though I spoke at some places in some harsher terms. That was unavoidable. After all, as already said, "all sorts need to take the world", and in the drama of human evolution fates conspire to have the actors on the scene. The stars work to turn the course of events. Ages have passed that way and ages have to pass that same way.

Life floats over the cold rough seas of competitive business and when the unscrupulous take into such a thing his methods would always be treacherous and venomous. When it takes such a turn there could be no human warmth in him. He would be a brute and a cut-throat but the world is made for everyone to swim along the turbulent currents of unmanly ways of man. People very often see the worthlessness of the human link and human relationship that is displayed as a dramatic drudgery, and, of course, it is needless to say that "graves are dug by relatives"

II

I shudder when I think why I had been so- speaking, lecturing, reciting- whatever that came to my mind, meetings, delegations or conference- educational,

cultural or literary gatherings— readings and writings, and, lastly, of course, my own professional duties. All such opportunities have afforded me ample scope to know things in better perspective.

A Swedish proverb says that "it is easy to take the cow to the water than the water to the cow". Similarly it is easier to show men how hollow they look instead of telling them to be otherwise. The Indian public life of the Gandhian era took such a turn that much was played on mass hypnotism. People were debunked from end to end and the leaders played the game. "The public life was poisoned at the fountain with the leaders, after making a show of leading, took to following." Every one followed the way the sheep went and those shepherds later sought to follow the sheep.

The Kodavas, being a small community have scope to develop themselves further in the cultural sense of the term but it was a pity that there was no effective effort in that direction. Some people paid money to the Samajas as though they are paying to the political parties. Instead of doing so, if they divert those funds to their own family houses, every family house in Nads could themselves become Samajas instead of these Kodavas marching like cattle to the towns. Why not turn every family house into a Samaja and thus try to demolish the Samaja buildings in the towns? After all, the Nad houses are now electrified, roads are there and buses run all over. Most of the Kodavas now have cars or jeeps. That being so what attraction is there in the towns which are only the populated villages? It is better these hundreds of families turn their family houses into Samaja buildings, by increas-

ing their size and equipping them with the facilities which these town Samajas offer. That would be a good idea for this scattering community, and if at least ten or twenty families start doing that the rest will follow and the Nads could once again become the hub of social and cultural activities as in ancient times. I hope at least a few of them would take the lead and do accordingly.

However, the Kodavas have now only two ways to rise up as a distinctive small race. Firstly, they have to develop their culture and then display it all over with pride as they were made to be so by the Britishers in the earlier times. They have to show up as they did at the Republic Day celebrations at New Delhi some time back, and, secondly, they have to come up in games and sports. As it is, a good many of them have risen to the top, and, for instance, the Uthayya Memorial hockey team had achieved signal success after facing some high class all-India teams in Bangalore in 1967. That showed that the ancient spirit was still in tact. Given more opportunity they could easily come up in the national level as second to none.

I think that it would not be out of place if I refer to those hundreds or even thousands of men in the country's defence services. I should say that excepting about half-a-dozen of them those thousands of Kodavas, nay the Indians, were just the mugs in the sense that none of them did anything for the progress and development of their communities. Those men in their uniforms were just the jokers and errand boys by the way they spent their years in the Army, especially in peace-time. How did they spend all those calm and quiet years when there was nothing for them to fight even with their own shadows?

They must have been simply boozing and dozing and then go about in an arrogant poise, and wait for the last day of the month, pocket their salaries and then pretend as though they were busy. This is a pitiable existence and a waste of national talent when they could have been shipped to do some other work during those peace times for the money they were drawing from the national exchequer. That would have been the only way to shake them up into grim realities.

I had to say this because I have known that among the soldiers in the western countries there are great writers, scholars, economists, artists, sailors, explorers, mountaineers and others. In the last century, the European officers and soldiers of the Indian Army and civil service wrote mighty treatises, scholarly books, dictionaries etc, explored this vast country, surveyed every untrodden path all over and thus made things easy for the modern cynics to enjoy the fruits of their gallant and relentless endeavour. Some of those western soldiers were even Vedic scholars and polished linguists and some eminent scholars among them were generals, brigadiers, colonels, majors and captains. Those enterprising folks did all that job during the peacetime and then the ablest among them were drawn into civil service to continue their work and the enlightened Government of the time supported them in ample measure. Now compare our uniformed upstarts with those giants, and how inspid these fellows are!

III

A word about the Kodavas who are outside Coorg in various cities and towns either in civil service, or domestic

service. How do they spend their spare time when their compatriots at home brave the monsoon winds in the open farms and fields? How do they spend all their time? Most of them, I know, simply gather in small groups of three or four, or four or five, and play cards or just talk and the victims of their malicious gossip are those unfortunate folks who are left at home in Coorg. A good many of them have another important service and that is to bring ill-will and discord among their own people with their too much of back-biting business. Along with their business in cardamom, timber, tobacco etc etc, they take to a hobby of this sort and their greatest day would be when they see their vicious game of breaking the relationship among peoples succeed. The Samaja buildings or some Samajas outside Coorg are just the houses of cards standing precariously—some men posing as progressives and some as conservatives.

Some younger men, with little education and resources, go about as vagabonds. They often hide their heads from the men of their own community, but they are cheaters and swindlers. Yet a few of them, even after they are established in some sort of jobs, would never forget their game of horsetrading and debunking people, and they are habitual and chronic undesirables in any society. Such men are also ferocious blabber-mouths and they talk more in derogatory terms about their own people in order to show up, and thus cover up their mean and wretched existence. It is a happy day for them if they see another of their own tribe or breed suffer in some way or the other. I have seen such people even if they are 75 years' old, 60 years or 40 years.

I am sorry to say all this about the people of my own

community but I wish that such men and women read all that I wrote and see if they can improve their ways for their own or of the community's good. They must come out of their own grooves and dens and cells and walk straight as reasonably decent ladies and gentlemen. There is nothing to be shy about working for religious and cultural causes. The education that the man acquired today is of a perverted type and that does not stress on the ethical aspects of cultural traits of the peoples of the world. There are numerous communities in the world scattered outside their homes far and wide. Even then they work for their own groups and communities and here I can cite the Jews on how well and intensely they serve their homeland-Israel even though they are spread all over the world. The Kodavas too should learn such things and then go ahead. They would gain nothing by their cynicism. There is nothing to be shy about the Kodava pattern of dress, names, rituals etc etc. Ignoring all that would be only a mark of perversion, arrogance and even slavishness.

Unless we foster a brotherly feeling and kinship the community would disintegrate. So much so it has come to the extent of an Arab proverb which says that regarding the enemies one has to think only once whereas with regard to friends one has to think 100 times, and, one can add that when it comes to the dealing with malicious relations and colleagues one has to think one-hundred-and-one times.

So that's the way the things are ! I saw things going on that way and so I thought it better to offer some solutions to the problem. I could see things because I kept on running from place to place, and that was life which was

extremely profitable as well as exciting, especially in the intellectual sense. As the Africans say that those who run for life will never get tired. I too ran from one end to the other in search of peace that I badly needed, and now I feel that I could reach the fulfilment though it is an illusion. But I find satisfaction when honoured, yes honoured both with brickbats and bouquets, but that didn't make my head turn in either way. That's why I say that the whole existence is just dramatic and unreal.

I have already said, I have been in correspondence with some people and all of them have written to me nice letters. I am grateful for all of them. But sometimes if one writes like this it certainly affords some embarrassing shake up, and, for instance, here is a specimen :

".....I have been following your career with admiration. You are indeed a remarkable man—an outstanding example of what one could achieve if there is determinationAs to your activities-I do envy you. Well, your reputation is well-earned. You did earn that by dint of hard work and perseverance while we languished here with easy life. You exploited your talents for further development while we have wasted them without using them ; and you"

And you, what? This was written by none other than Biddanda Kushalappa (Page 219) who alone among his associates possessed energy, drive, ambition etc and came up in any field be it the field of Education, Politics or Industry. Therefore, such expressions as the one poured out as above could be a reflection of his own personality. Seldom could the hordes of the streets be as generous as the one who could write as above.

IV

A good many things were just frivolous and yet horrible. Years back when a very important letter came to me from a foreign country it came to my home address. The village postmaster saw what it was and the first thing that he did was to send that registered letter back to that country stating that my whereabouts were not known. But the letter which was on its return journey was halted by the Bombay GPO. They saw the vicious game of a village postman-a Kodava-and then redirected that letter back to him with an order to trace my address and forward that letter to me. This time the man had to do his job and I still possess the envelope filled with date-stamps etc and it is well-worth displaying in a museum.

It is distressing to see among the Kodavas, as in the rest of the folks too, the indiscriminate and ruthless exploitation and cheating taking place almost every day and in almost every family even if they are the well-to-do ones. In this book I gave some test cases in respect of Guggu, Boggu, Gupta and some others and they are all fit cases to be subjected to a thorough psychiatric tests because they do the things they did only when they are off their heads and when they have some serious trouble of mental as well as moral deficiency. Now, to take for the purpose of illustration, Boggu (Page 487) managed to manouvere and take from his parents the job of looking after the land, and the result was that the whole thing went to the dogs due to the man's swindling away all the resources. Boggu's brother Boddu came from Wynad four days before his wedding when he was told by his parents that there was not even a grain of rice or paddy in

the house—let alone the rest of the things, and that about six cartloads of paddy was just sold away by Boggu and that the money was pocketed by him. They also added that Boggu did so every year in respect of every available product on one pretext or the other and so on. Now poor Boddu had to helplessly manage to get rice from shops and mills to see that his wedding went through alright.

It didn't end there. Though Boggu's and Boddu's parents had considerable land and resources they would not have a single penny for their own expense because it was Boggu, the villain, who used to pocket everything. The old couple had nothing to give even as a present to their son who was getting married after himself spending a lot over the house and the surroundings. Boddu again ran to the town and purchased two gold coins and gave them to his parents to offer them as presents to himself.

That did not end there. The following year Boddu had a child and the old couple had nothing to offer as a gift to the new-comer, and by this time it was clear that Boggu did not leave anything at home. Boddu had to again buy two small pieces of gold and gave his parents to present them to the child. All the time, Boggu the swindler, was going about among his hoards bragging for his livelihood while he left nothing at home for the survival of his own people. He would load his stomach anywhere and everywhere and then get back home to pretend before his mother that he ate less in his house to spare food for others. Things ranging from chicken to oxen were sold out by him one by one and without informing of his vicious deal to anyone, and together with that he was busy creating discord between one and all in the family, and

his approach to prejudice the others was in the way, "Well, don't tell him or them; the fact about him or them was that and that and that,"

Boddu saw all this going to an extreme extent, and finally he had to act to get Boggu ousted from there along with some coolies, both men and women, who were his friends and with whom he corroborated to loot the hard-earned things of his parents, and, thereafter, he roamed about as a vagabond doing his tobacco business. Of course, this is a test case, and how many more are there of this type, anyone could say right there, because they ought to be there!

The Kodagu Weekly of the 5th February 1971, carried an article "Who are the Kodavas?". That was written by one 'Charitre Priya' whom I do not know. He wrote the review of a book by 'Gupta' (Page 525) who was as usual advertising his product by asking his 'Priya' to write for him. That article said that Richtor, Rice, Holland, Cobb and others tried unsuccessfully to find out who the Kodavas are, and then added that as this 'Gupta' agreed with the views of one Mr. Hutton, this 'Gupta' could be taken as right on the point for the time being.

What a cheeky way of writing and trading things! Both these Gupta and his 'Priya' did not see those original works where they say that those writers discussed on the subject, and particularly of T. Holland, and both these Gupta and his 'Priya' would not say that they got the clue to the subject from my work which they want to stealthily ignore. Incidentally, both these Gupta and his 'Priya' did not know that one Cobb was not at all a writer but only an old British officer, and they did not also know

that none of the above said writers named by them discussed on the origin of the Kodavas but only wrote on the ethnic or anthropological characteristics of this small race just as they wrote of other races and tribes.

I am not able to understand why this wily gangsters with their deceptive pseudonyms cheat the whole lot of the readers with such distortious writings, and if that Gupta's 'Priya' is a brahmin, he must be knowing how to bluff even in print. Simply copying down things out of egotistic and mercenary interests should have a limit.

It may be the fundamental right to 'cheat many and make money', and I have no quarrel with such men. But those of the Kodagu Company, perhaps, a bunch of idiots, are supremely indifferent if one uses a public journal for private trade and thus "inflict pain on others as long as he could remain undetected", as a friend of his wrote.

Anyway the man has now been detected and I have quoted him exhaustively. One could see that even misers who had not spared a single penny for the noblest of the causes in the past have given money to this man, a newspaper producer, and why did those people do so except that they yearned to get some sort of publicity as men of great sacrifice? Kodira Uthappa who has been perhaps good to listen to the words that falls from the lips of richer folks was one such, but these Uthappa, Chinnappa and others cannot get away from me because they wanted people to see them, and I too saw them. They were clamouring to get some cheap popularity and that was apparent from the fact that they were once routed in some elections years back. Anyway the motives of those who dangle their money before some political parties or some public bodies

are known to themselves and not to the receivers like me, whowould obviously need anyone's black or red money very badly.

The Kodavas have always been the victims all along of the Lingayat imposters, Brahmin manouevrers and later by those of their own breed in some way or the other. These things are as clear as daylight for anyone to see. Any-one could bluff them to hell in the way one did by mis-using a public press, its stationary and one's own working time to boost one's trade with several aliases. No doubt, such things would suffice to immoralise a stupid and yet haughty race. When I wrote (Page 504) to collect all the books written on Goorg my idea was that the future writers and researchers would be able to evaluate the fraud more clearly than I have tried to do. As I wrote things this way, a gentleman gently reminded me that I was "brutally frank and never mince words". He also added that :

"Of course, we want such rare type of people who show our backs and you are one such rare critic. But they do not win favour or popularity."

This was well said by one whose name has appeared in this book many times. But I did try to bluff and brag to win popularity but I hopelessly failed to get benefited by such hoax. What can I do ?

V

That was that ! As I was writing these last pages, I heard in March 1971, the news of the death of Kolera Karumbayya (Page 420), a very efficient teacher turned into a clever lawyer, a public worker, a persuasive platform speaker, and for a term a member of the Senate,

Mysore University. He was an M.L.C. and later an M.L.A., from about 1944 to 1960. I have a personal reason to speak about him that in 1941, exactly 30 years back he earnestly pleaded that I should take up the sub-editorship of the Kodagu Weekly, but then somehow felt that I would be happy as a 'small' teacher rather than being a mouthpiece of some politicians of those days. He reminded me again after some time, but, would I have been there if I had accepted that ?

An important person I missed so far to name was that of Dr. Mallachira Muthanna, Director of the Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. This Dr. M.S. Muthanna, like Dr. Konganda T. Achayya, (Page 567) is a silent and yet a wellknown scientist with some original contributions to the field of science. Such men, no doubt, belied the impression that those men of Coorg are merely fit to the army and nowhere else. Doubtlessly, the Kodavas are in the top even in the intellectual enterprises and in almost every field.

Yet another instance for that is the life of Palanganda Appayya who was down-right a man of the world and yet an ascetic in every sense of the word. Unlike the rest of the Swamis in saffron robes and of doubtful integrity, Palanganda Appayya, after retiring from civil service, was able to attract a devoted band of followers around him—all Kodavas—both men and women. The Kaveri Ashrama founded by him in Virarajpet in 1941, the only public Ashrama manned entirely by the Kodavas, is a reminder to Appayya's spiritual bearings and pious life.

Among the Amma Kodavas, though they are very few in number, two names stand out prominently, and one

was that of A. Kalammayya (Vide page 333) who spent his last days at the Hanuman Ghat, Kashi, and the other of Puthamane Muddammayya of Ponnampet—an ardent nationalist and a lover of Coorg, her people and culture.

I was happy to see in the Illustrated Weekly of India of the 1st August 1971, those profusely illustrated articles by Rane Kuttayya, and one by my friend G. Srinivasa Rao from Andhra State. But my only complaint was that those photographs were not fully representative compared to those articles and pictures appeared in the same journal on other major Indian communities.

Much is being said about the beauty of Kodava women but the photographs chosen by Rane Kuttayya, fail to reveal any such beauties. Beauty is seldom found in crowds although they are there but they must be selected, grouped and then photographed. Some of those politicians named in the pages of that journal, it is said, contributed "to the social and political WELFARE". No; that is totally wrong. They contributed to social and political WARFARE and let us be honest about that. I could not see them even through the magnifying glass, working for anyone's welfare at least after the 1940s, and, after all, that was not their job.

Out of those photographs that were selected for that journal, I have comments to make only with regard to two of them. She could have picked up a better picture of Cheppudira Poonacha in which his eyes needn't have had to look bloody rude, and there he seemed as though yet haunting and eyeing on some game. Secondly, I have a word on the photograph of Rane Kuttayya herself in which she looks dazed, perhaps, due to her being in the

Coorg costume and Kodava saree just for a photograph when at all other times she might show herself differently.

I am sorry for these modern women. It is time they realise that they are the custodians of the culture and traditional values. Writing articles and glorifying the days of our mothers is different; it is much better they go in the footsteps of their mothers many of whom are still good and God-fearing. Otherwise, like most of our writings of no consequence, Ranee Kuttayya's writings also might be taken as a doodling with pen and paper and that might not mean anything. We need many writers like her but let her not write like Gupta and Guggu who wrote things in which they didn't believe, didn't adore, honour, love or respect. I would not, however, say these things directly to an enterprising young lady writer. All these are my general observations.

I have been saying very often even in foreign countries that a woman is the custodian of all that is good and sacred for the well-being of the family or community. Where woman adores the house there morality and culture prevail; where woman commands respect there the gods rejoice; if in a woman combines both intelligence and goodness there settles peace and harmony but when a woman abuses her natural duty and traditional ways, there reigns no peace, no love, no good-will, nothing!

The Kodavas these days brag too much and that sounds very shrill like the noise of an empty tin. During the British days, these men, like the rest of the Indians, were an emerging race from the depth unto which they had fallen. Luckily those aliens loved and fostered the Hindu culture more than those so-called Hindus them-

selves. When the Viceroy Lord Irwin visited Coorg in 1929, the whole of Coorg was made to turn out to receive him in their colourful national costume and that was no doubt a rewarding and refreshing scene, but 28 years later when the prime minister Nehru visited Coorg, his host Gen. Cariappa, appealed to the Kodavas to show up in their national costume, but then those boorish and tin-pot Kodavas had all deserted their family homes, strolled along in the streets as robots, built street Samajas for trumpeting and had become henchmen of those politicians of the streets. That was all their democracy, and may be their 'demo-crazy' which they call 'progress'.

Those men also booze saying that times have changed. That is a shameless way of describing the rot that is set-in; and, especially during the last 20 years from 1950 to 1970, their fall has been outstanding. I wrote about those men, either small or big, weak or sneak, who played a double role and when they see me doing so they weep and wail saying why after all I should bother and disturb them who are otherwise happy.

But let me add a word to what was already said by others in that same Illustrated Weekly of India. Ranee Kuttayya's (and, why Raani is spelt in a crooked way a Ranee? You see, there lies the whole trouble!) efforts at writing on Kodavas fell short and there was an awful lack of information on the subject. I felt that some competent hands should have ventured on that simple and yet a delicate theme.

When Prasad Seshadri wrote in that same 'Weekly' of the 29th August 1971, on Indian communities synonymising Westernization with being progressive and modern,

I think he told what I had been trying to tell these perverted and 'modernised' Kodavas in many pages of this book. Indeed, he said about imitating those Western, Eastern or Northern people and calling it 'progressive' as primitivization. That was exactly what I said in my letters to the Kodava Samaja three years back. (Vide pages 494 to 506 of this book).

Moreover, when I went on correcting and answering that outrageously deceptive and damaging book 'Kodavas', and some of the articles by that same man in *THE KODAGU*, I wanted to criticise those 'primitive' ideas of these 'modern' fake writers who along with their patrons imitate the non-Kodava words for names, non-Kodava dress for their style of costume and non-Kodava ways of grinning, cheating and producing fake and filth on paper—as modern. I am glad that Mr. P. Seshadri made my task easy by calling such perverted upstarts and writers as 'primitive' hordes. I think, I have made things clear at pages 143 to 160 of this book by trying to answer some obnoxious and malicious writings of some so called writers.

As I was writing this part of the story I received from Cheranda Mandanna, a senior colleague of mine and now the managing director of the Kodagu Co., the entire list of the subscribers of the Kodagu Weekly. I thank him for sending that to me as per my request. I counted the names of the subscribers in the list and found that 95 per cent of the readers were Kodavas. After seeing that I felt sure that all that I wrote here was true.

Why after all did the man play such a deceptive game all those years of his work inside the cell writing such anti-national and anti-Kodava blurbs in a sneaky and

stealthy way and thus mislead everyone? Why was he hiding news about people and why was he deceiving his own conscience if at all he had one! I have minutely stated here how the man played a truant there from the very beginning and it is for the people who fostered that junk to say what else he or they did all that time.

However, now I am sure that I was quite right since some time now in requesting Cheranda Mandanna to send the man out from there. The qualifications to become an editor of such a paper is not that one should know to write some fake stories in Kannada but a love for his people and their heritage. Agenuine Kodava should be made to sit there and not an adulterated type from the streets because newspapers, either big or small, are read by many. Filthy and diseased minds could seldom do justice to such jobs. The Kodavas would not have turned their backs to their tradition if the weekly paper that they were reading had given them a good direction, which directives they badly needed in the past.

I was asked by some friends as to who were those three 'great men' who turned down my request to bring out my book on the late Gen. Thimmayya and then themselves use the sale proceeds for some cause (Page 522). Two of them were Kodira Uthappa (Page 241) and Apparanda Thimmayya (Page 419), and, both these men have found all that I write as a trash, but, I am afraid, they would not forget incidents concerning themselves as, for instance, said at page 369 and elsewhere in this book.

But I thank them for having given me the opportunity to write this. The third gentleman in the team was one who sat on a fence to see which side he could jump

and he jumped the other side alright. But they have all done good many good things which I don't know, but here I write things concerning me and me alone, although I wrote only one-hundredth of the things that I knew. If I proceed to say further, I would not be able to bear the cost of getting up this book.

After all what did I see of these leading Kodavas during the last 100 years, or in the recent days? The moment any rascal and his 'faithful' came to power, the Kodavas, the richer ones, become their boot-lickers. (Vide page 255) Defecting from one group to another which wield official or political power just to carry on their day-to-day existence, playing the game of opportunism with the strength of their money, taking advantage of their being officials long back and then fooling the people in the name of social or community work, were all done repeatedly by these people about whom I have been saying all along. Such things, no doubt, contribute to a sort of degradation to the community. What is more, they would not like me writing all these even indirectly—let alone directly. They even blasted some of my views just in order to quench their chagrin. Blunt expressions prick the heads of those who deserved such things and the old adage is that a writer must suffer to be at his best. So I don't mind suffering to be at least the second best.

A highly degrading feature is that the richer folks demoralising the community by their arrogance and expecting the poorer ones to look after the culture business. The in-coming coffee money have made all sorts of men as strange bed-fellows to ignore the traditional values of life. Indeed, the Kodavas deserve some whipping at the hands

of their own men as was done in the pre-British days. Somehow, their alien masters of the last century brought them to the forefront too soon and sooner than anyone had expected, but, unless they are whipped at least in the form of moral and legal sanction those gamblers and boozers would never learn things by themselves nor would they try to discern or discriminate things clearly and perceptively.

This is a serious issue of communal solidarity and if this aspect of the problem is forgotten by those men who have got bloated with, their riches, then, of course, they will soon be uprooted by the force of events. Those Kodavas who are outside Coorg should have an eye on those who are inside Coorg who feel that they are left out there to get drowned in the ever-flowing flood of influx from Kerala and Mysore. It is always the one who is at a distance could visualise things clearly than those who are already there.

So that's that ! So many people have written about human inadequacies and mine need not be an additional one. Moreover, grumbling over these things would simply be an exercise in futility but yet one should do some exercise to keep fit physically or otherwise. This writing seems to be an effort at that and nothing more. People say that due to the clearance of jungles there has been a great reduction in wildlife but there is no shortage for vipers, scorpions, hyaenas and crocodiles. Those are there in plenty ! ! !

VI

Time is changing, but when it did not look like changing for the good it only means that man is off the track, and this has been the age-old complaint.

*

Progress—as it is understood today—is just a mental perversion. Scientists have taken the world too far ahead and thus left the millions of mugs in a delusion of progress.

*

When I was in my twenties, I used to think that the world wouldn't get along without me, but now as I come to the fifties I pause to think how after all this same world brought me thus far !

*

When I felt as though fed up with a million and one little things over a few years there, it was a question of maintaining my sense of humour, ethics and morality, and essentially my sanity.

*

The most arrogant of the creatures that I saw was the man, and the well-known joke is that "all the cemeteries are filled with people who thought the world couldn't get along without them".

*

For me there is no God. A truly good and honest man is a rare commodity in the world and if an ideal person of the sort exists anywhere I would look upon him as a god, and, till I get one such I am the god for myself.

There is no age for three C-s, conduct, character and culture, which are ever fresh and beautiful if those traits are backed up by religious fervour. That's how the ancient values still survive.



I belong to the old times just as much as I am of the modern times living amidst the dazzling civilization, and I hold the views which are as ancient as they are modern.



For the Kodavas, their cultural sanctity and traditional values are themselves the religious codes. In this there is no place for cynicism which is a sign of arrogance that's based on ignorance.



Kodava Education Fund could now be called the Kodava Cultural Development Fund and the scheme for utilising that fund should take the course that I have tried to say in the last few pages of this book.



The Kodavas leaving the ircool highland to the plains elsewhere as self-exiled refugees and starting colonies there is as disgraceful as their mark of 'progress', which is another word for primitivization. That's like the colonization of the Tibetans at Peryapatna who still yearn to get back to their golden plateau if international conditions permit them.



In the month of December every year an annual conference of the Kodavas should take place with the dele-

gates from all the Samajas of outside Coorg participating in it and accompanied with usual fanfare and festivities.



It must be a rule to elect younger men and women as office bearers of the family or the town Samajas, and women should be empowered to act against all those who violate the codes of social discipline.



‘Why do you worry if others say or do such and such a thing?’ say Chandu and others, but their pious make up was showing their own viciousness whenever they were touched by anyone even unwittingly. That was all the man’s wretched philosophy!



A good many writers of the type I said in this book utter blatant lies in print and mislead the whole nation! In Pakistan, a country of 24 years old, they tell their history beginning from 2000 B.C.



It is high time that we take a second look at all our glorified gods, saints, philosophers and writers because there is a good deal of fraud hidden underneath them; but if we do so, we may have no gods or saints in whose name we could trade.



When I see the duds and drabs posing as the wisest and showing as the most learned, I certainly feel that I am a misfit even as a third-rate worker, fourth-rate speaker and tenth-rate writer. Where else is my place but hell?

So far I wrote things as I saw them but there is a possibility of all that I wrote becoming obsolete. Those men might turn out to be good (although it is highly improbable) and those including my own whom I praised, might turn out to be bad. Who knows? Indeed, who knows?



Being upright is considered eccentricity in this age of downright debauchery both in private and public life, and the flourishing of hooligans in so large numbers as respectable creatures is no doubt a mystery of the evolution of the social behaviour.



I consider that each and every day of additional life to me is a gift awarded to see and enjoy the marvels of modern science and other than that the entire living in this world is a wretched existence—sheer stale and tasteless, colourless and absolutely worthless.



I strongly plead for retaining English language as a medium in schools and public offices in the interest of the over-all development of the nation. The prejudice of some against English is because those who have learnt it abuse its use by using it all day and all night and thus create a class of haughty anglicised slaves.



Mysore University is no substitute for the old Madras University under which the then enlightened districts of

Coorg and South Kanara enjoyed a high quality and standard of education. It is time that these two districts have their own University and revive their past glory of intellectual and educational standards.



The British Government in India was a 'God-sent' thing, and had it been the Muslims, the French or the Portuguese, the result would have been disastrous. The British patronised our culture and lifted the nation from the darkness to light, and that's all that happened.



We say Progress: what progress! I see the man's struggles and sorrows, his prides and prejudices, his crude and dubious make-up and his malicious designs are just the same as it was 1000 years back. The scientist invented radio, television etc and packed the man to the moon and novices in the jungles brag about progress! That's a joke!!



I find that most of the people wasted their life by prying and probing into others' affairs only to find out how much of a tramp and loafer is the other man compared to himself or themselves.



Many Asian and African countries mercilessly hang or execute all sorts of traitors, black-marketeers, and totally undesirable and dishonest folks but I am amazed to find in India that such men are honoured with titles, awards and in some cases with their statues.

Ingratitude is a wretched part of Indian make up. For a thousand things the British did, especially in the field of administration and social development, these ungrateful men desire all that to be forgotten and then blow their own trumpets—the sound of which is again shrill and hypocritical.



Contributions to public or communal funds are no longer the acts of charity; it is a respectable tax that everyone should be made to pay. Those richer folks who are quietly hiding their heads should be alerted to come to the open and not remain as 'tax-dodgers'.



Long-haired men from India trade in foreign countries with their religion, science of meditation, Yoga, 'Hare Krishna' etc when millions of Indians themselves badly need those things. Some-how I feel, though I am here, my soul is rooted in my own land, and that's all the difference between them and me.



I speak bitterly only after I see at least a dozen times one's cruel game of playing one against the other whereas the most others the moment they see such things behave like vipers and resort to immediate vengeful retort against others. That's all the difference between them and me.



Democracy is an unwholesome set up in countries like that of ours because it brings to the surface all sorts of villains who contribute to the social and economic frus-

tration and national misery. But there is no system that is second best, they say !

*

In spite of so much hypocrisy that surround the very existence of the man and despite my being a part and parcel of all that unavoidable hypocrisy which is the very fabric of our daily life, I preferred to continue as one fighting that same hypocrisy without running away to monasteries to lead a life of hypocrites.

*

Everything is said and done, had I used my harsh wit and sane commonsense in time and curbed those few rascals then and there, I am sure that this memoirs would not have come to this length and bulk ; but, without those experiences, what else to write ?

*

In fine, if this is all that could be expected of man, if this is all the man's moral limits, if this eternal humbug alone is the food that he could offer to his senses and if this endless perversion alone is the be-all and end-all of the existence, I would say that those sensible, faithful, dependable and yet beautifully pious animals are the most decent and gentlest of God's creations !

*

The Shakespearean truth and humour concerning the entire mess is that :

‘ Oh, what a world of vile ill-favoured faults,
Looks handsome in three-thousand pounds a year ! ! ! ’

But an unknown worshipper like an unknown commoner
would yearn to be an asset to the society in his own humble
way, and, his prayer would be that :

* Give me a sense of humour, Lord,
Give me the grace to see the joke ;
To get some happiness from life,
And pass it on to other folk ! ! ! *

‘JAI JAGAT’



INDEX



Achayya	Appaneravanda- 191,205,
„	Biddanda G. 545,
„	Cheranda- 569,
„	Kattemane- 192,
„	Ketolira- 192, 193,
„	Konganda-237,
„	„ T. Dr. 567, 589,
„	Palekanda- 193,
Aiamma	Biddanda P.-267,
Aianna	Ajjikutira- 569,
„	Kodandera M.- 553,
„	Palekanda- 193, 246,
Aiappa	Apparanda Lt.-Gen.-193, 237,
„	Boverianda- 194,
„	Kadumanda Dr.-195,
„	Koluvanda- 195,
„	Mukkatira RB.- 195, 247,
„	Munjandira- 554,
Akkamma	Konganda Miss (Dr.)-195, 248,
Appacha	Appaneravanda Kavi-196,295 to 303,
„	Iychettira- 551,
„	Mathanda- 196,201,566,
Appanna	Ajjikutira P.- 197,
„	Chowrira Dwn.- 197,258,
„	Palanganda-245,
Appayya	Chendrimada -199,247,
„	Chettolira-200,
„	Chottemada- 200,

Appayya	Codanda R.S.- 570,
„	Iychettira Dwn.- 200,
„	Kayyendira-201, 213,
„	Konganda-201,
„	Koravanda Dr. -201, 202,
„	Kuppanda- 552,
„	Palanganda- 589,
„	Polladevi- 202,
Aypanna	Mukkatira- 202,203,

*

*

Abdul	Ghafur Khan- 572,
„	Rahman Khan KB.- 329,
Ananthapadmanabha Rao-	156,349.

*

*

Belliappa	Appaneravanda- 203,
„	Ballachanda A.- 106,203,545,
„	Chonira- 566,
„	Kambiranda- 553,
„	Maniapanda RB.- 204, 566,
„	Palekanda- 570,
„	Pandanda Dr.- 247,568,
„	Pandianda-103 to 105, 160, 204, 528, etc.
„	Pattacheravana- 205,
„	Pattamada K.- 568,
„	Pemmaada IAS.- 205,
„	Someyanda- 333, ..
Bhimayya	Biddanda P.- 248,
„	Paruvangada- 205,570,
Biddappa	Cheppudira- 570,
„	Mandepanda- 267,

- Biddayya** Matharanda- 248, 263,
Bollamma Codanda P. Miss.- 236, 333,
 „ Manyapanda- 205, 566,
Bopanna Apparanda Dwn.- 49, 57, 194, 205, 252,
Bopayya Biddanda- 206, 207, 245, 386,
 „ „ P.- 553,
 „ Mukkatira- 571,
 „ Pandanda- 247, 570,

*

*

- Balachandra M.**- 571,
Basava Kunta- 50, 56, 203, 455,
Bendre D.R.- 275, 469,
Bowring Lewin- 68, 189,
Brown Hilton- 189; 255, 386, 524,
Bull Ivor- 315, 324, 337,

*

*

- Chengappa** Biddands RS.- 207, 567,
 „ Codanda- 571,
 „ Iychettira M.- 555 to 558, 562,
 „ Karavanda J.- 24,
 „ Ketolira CIE.- 208, 289, 330, 543, etc.
 „ Kodandera RS.- 209, 326,
 „ Machimada A.- 537,
 „ Mathanda- 209,
 „ Pandanda RB.- 210, 504,
 „ Paddikuthira- 128, 210, 526,
 „ Perianda- 524,
 „ Telapanda- 210, 211,
Cheramana Chonira- 211, 244,
 „ Mandetira- 553,

Chetticha Merianda- 211,
 Chinnappa Kotera- 169 to 176, 378, 431, 521,
 „ Mandepanda- 212, 247,
 „ „ C.- 553,
 „ Nadikerianda- 212, 524,

* *

Campbell John Lt.- 245,
 Chennabasappa K.- 164 to 168,
 Cherri Chityanna Miss- 568,
 Chondu Kullachanda- 201, 212,
 Cobb Henry Sir.- 189, 255,
 Cole Robert Capt.- 50, 55, 189, 201
 Connor Lieut.- 60, 189,
 Cubbon Mark Sir.- 51, 189, 253,

* *

Devayya Bittianda- 570,
 „ Codanda M.- 213,
 „ Kayapanda- 551,
 „ Koluvanda- 213,
 „ „ - 570,
 „ Madeyanda- 213,
 Doddavva Alamanda Mrs.- 213,
 Doddavva Kannanda- 214, 254,

* *

Dechu Appayya Miss.- 568,
 Dhanalaxmi Miss.- 127, 403, 406,

* *

Fraser J. Lt. Col.- 49, 51, 90, 189,

* *

- Ganapathy Apadanda-** 291, 292,
 „ **Bachanda D.-** 525,
 „ **Ballachanda-** 570,
 „ **Biddanda I.-** 214,
 „ **Cheppudira Dr.-** 569,
 „ **Codanda Col.-** 215, 248,
 „ **Iychettira C.-** 334,
 „ „ **M.-** 558 to 562,
 „ **Kakamada K.-** 420,
 „ **Kambiranda Barr.-** 230, 569,
 „ **Kayapanda-** 571,
 „ **Kithianda Col.-** 240,
 „ **Konganda R.B.-** 215.

*

*

- Ganesh Rao J.-** 536,
Garman Michael- 517,
Gopala Das B.- 287,
Gordon J. De.- 63,
Gowramma Princess- 61, 515,

*

*

- Kalappa Kithianda-** 549,
Kariappa Allapanda Brig.- 215,
 „ **Apparanda A.-** 215,
 „ „ **Barr.-** 569,
 „ **Biddanda M.-** 103,
 „ **Bolakaranda M.-** 333,
 „ **Bollera IAS.-** 216,
 „ **Chonira-** 570,
 „ **Chowrira Dwn.-** 217,
 „ **Codanda Brig.-** 217,
 „ „ **M. R.B.-** 248, 567, 569,

- Kariappa** Kodandera Gen.- 10 to 13, 160, 217, 532, etc.
 „ Koluvanda- 201, 217, 246,
 „ Manyapanda IAS.- 218,
 „ Munjandira- 570,
 „ Pattada Dr.- 545,
Karumbayya Biddanda- 248,
 „ Chendrimada- 218,
 „ Kademada Dr.- 550,
 „ Kolera P.- 420, 588,
 „ Kollimada- 219, 248,
 „ Mukkatira- 234,
Kunjappa Devanira- 569,
Kushalappa Biddanda- 219, 329, 348, 477, etc.
 „ Paruvangada- 102, 172, 219,
Kuttappa Biddanda P.- 220,
 „ Chendrimada- 570,
Kuttayya Kodandera RB.- 172, 220,
 „ Mathanda- 550,
 * *
Kalammayya- 333, 589,
Kamala Achayya- 237, 333,
Krishnayya D.N.- 524,
 * *
Laxminarayana Dwn.- 49, 52, 232, 386,
Laxmanaswami Mudaliar Dr.- 326, 444,
Le Hardy Capt.- 62, 194, 206,
 * *
Machayya Cheppudira Barr.- 549, 569,
 „ Codanda M. RS.- 571,
 „ Machimada- 570,

- Machayya** Maletira- 570,
 „ Mathanda- 570,
Madappa Apparanda- 220,
 „ Kodandera- 549,
 „ „ IAS.- 220, 249,
 „ Mekerira- 537,
Madayya Codanda RB.- 102, 221, 246,
 „ (Commander)- 244,
 „ Nerapanda- 221,
 „ Puchimada- 552,
Mandanna Appachira- 222,
 „ Bittianda- 570,
 „ Cheranda- 593,
 „ Kongetira Dr.- 569,
 „ Mandepanda RB.- 224, 554,
Medappa Palekanda RB.- 223, 249, 541,
Monnappa Kodimanianda- 569,
 „ Pandanda- 363,
 „ Pemmanda RB.- 228, 249,
Monnayya Iychettira- 570,
 „ Mandepanda- 224,
Muddappa Codanda B.- 550,
 „ Kongetira B.- 553,
Muddayya Alamanda Dwn.- 224,
 „ Bittianda- 571,
 „ Karneravanda- 224,
 „ Kuppanda- 571,
 „ Mukkatira- 224,
Muthamma Chonira Miss, IFS.- 225, 249, 566,
Muthanna Bonira- 225, 244,
 „ Cheppudira- 571,

Muthanna (Karyakar)- 226, 245,
 „ **Kodandera S.-** 535,
 „ **Koravanda Barr.-** 541, 569,
 „ **Kotera P.-** 529 to 534,
 „ **Mallachira Dr.-** 589,
 „ **Manyapanda R.B.-** 102, 227, 247;
 „ **Nalcayanda IAS.-** 227,
 „ **Pandanda-** 228,
Muthayya Codanda M.- 228, 566,

*

*

Mahoney Capt.- 189, 253,
Mallappa Kittur- 109, 338, 452,
Manjunathayya Gundukuti- 337, 369,
Mariappa Bhat Prof.- 326,
Moegling Ed. Rev.- 238,
Marsden E.- 199,
Mudaliar G.T. DB.- 855, 340, 352,
Muddammayya P.- 589,
Muddappa Nidemane- 299, 306 to 308,
Muthanna Haragada T.- 103,

*

*

Nanjappa Biddanda- 570,
 „ **Bittianda-** 569,
 „ **Codanda Dr.-** 229,
 „ „ **S.-** 174,
 „ **Kademada-** 229,
 „ **Kambiranda R.B.-** 229, 230, 247,
 „ **Kodandera M.-** 230,
 „ **Koravanda R.B.-** 230,

*

*

Nagappayya- 48, 386,
 Narasimhamurthy C.-IAS.- 375,
 Nirmala Uthayya Miss.- 568,

*

*

Ponnappa Biddanda P.- 231,
 „ Cheppudira Brig.- 231, 333,
 „ „ Dwn.- 52, 57, 231, 242,
 „ Kalyatanda- 233,
 „ Konganda- 570,
 „ Kongetira- 233, 247,
 „ Mukkatira- 234,
 „ Paradanda- 233, 234,
 „ Pattamada M.- 103,
 Ponnanna Kulletira- 234, 254,
 Poonnavva Codanda Mrs. 229,
 Poonacha Cheppudira- 104, 113 to 124, 235, 453, etc.
 Poovayya Biddanda A.- 327, 517,
 „ Codanda B - 236,
 „ Kumbera K. FCS.- 236, 248,
 „ Pattada- 236,
 „ Pattamada- 128, 547,

*

*

Panikkar K.M.- 445,
 Pannant William- 56,
 Prichard J.W.- 62, 63, 535,

*

*

Rajaram Ponnappa- 231,
 Ramaachar- 349, 445,
 Rama Rao C.M.- 298, 329, 338,
 Rancee Kuttayya N- 589, to 561,

Rani Nanjappa N- 568,
 Richter George- 201, 246,

*

*

Seethamma Apparanda Mrs. (Dr.)- 237, 248,

„ Kodandera „ - 237,

„ Pandanda „ - 210,

Somanna Cheranda- 569,

Somayya Alamanda- 237,

„ Biddanda P.- 231,

„ „ (Karyakar)- 238, 242, 245,

„ Cheppudira RB.- 238,

Subbayya „ Brig.- 239,

„ „ RB.- 239,

„ Codanda- 570,

„ Iychettira G.- 239, 304, 369, 452, etc.

„ Kodandera- 571,

„ Kodimanianda- 569,

„ Kuppada- 571,

„ Nellamakala RS.- 308, 318, 339,

*

*

Sangayya- 127, 128, 406,

Sharma Tatachar- 349,

Shivamurthy Sastry- 306,

Somanna Nidemane- 314, 317, 324, 340,

Srinivasa Rao G.- 589,

„ „ M.- 571,

Srinivas M. N.- 24,

Sripathi Rao B. RB.- 572,

Subbannayya Nidtha- 572,

Subraya C.N.- 571.

*

*

Thammayya Kodira- 242,

Thangamma Kithianda Dr. (Mrs)- 240,

Thimmayya Apparanda C.- 337, 419, 595, etc.

„ Cheppudira R.B.- 240,

„ Kodandera- 237,

„ „ Gen.- 163, 240, 249, 522, etc.

„ Mandepanda- 533,

„ Moodera-548,

*

*

Taylor Robert- 253,

Thompson M.S.H.- 493.

*

*

Uthappa Kodira R.B.- 241, 300, 340, 520, etc.

„ Maletira- 569,

„ Nayakanda- 242,

„ Pulianda- 552

Uthayya Codanda- 569,

„ Mandira- 242,

„ Nadikerianda- 571,

„ Palekanda- 570,

„ Pattada C. - 243, 321, 324, 420, etc.

*

*

Venkappayya C.N.- 541, 571,

Venkatesha Iyengar Masti- 294, 446,

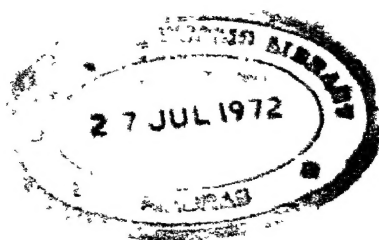
Vishwanath Rai- 383 to 386.

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Note : In the Index the names of the non-Kodavas and of those Kodavas without the traditional pattern of names are put separately but under the same alphabetical order.

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